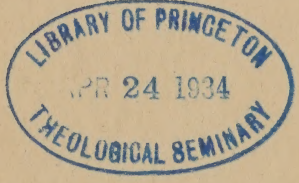

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THE EPIC OF JESUS

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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NEW YORK
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 99 George Street

INTRODUCTION

BY

PRESIDENT JOHN R. SAMPEY, D.D., LL.D.

THE *Epic of Jesus* by Dr. C. W. Durden recounts in measured lines the story of the life of the Christ as He moved among men. The author has given years to earnest study of the Four Gospels; and he bows as an humble worshipper in the presence of the Lord Jesus. Naturally the poem deals more fully with the loving deeds of Jesus than with His discourses. The story moves forward in pleasing fashion. While here and there a few infelicities of style remain, the narrative flows on with simple dignity and becoming reverence. The poem draws the reader along with unflagging interest.

Very vivid and impressive is the picture of Satan as he leaves the baptismal scene in the Jordan to summon all his cohorts in council to devise ways and means of destroying the Christ. Satan is unwilling to leave to his subordinates the task of seducing the Christ from His unselfish task, but goes in person to tempt the Man who had been acclaimed as the Son of God.

The author holds that the wine at Cana had in it no alcoholic poison:

"Such wine no grapes of earth have yielded since,
Nor Bacchus known the recipe to make;
No fiery poison foamed on chalice brim,
No demon spirit lurked in red-lipped cup,
Nor death his dance did hold for those who drank
Of vintage brewed in love and mystery."

While there are passages here and there through the poem that would invite quotation as pictures complete in themselves, the story is closely connected and the reader moves on rapidly from one incident to another.

An author who can persuade men to read again in a different form the story of the words and deeds of Jesus renders the world a good service. Dr. Durden has made it easy for the reader to keep company with the Son of Man through the years of His earthly ministry. For the many passages in which the narrative flowers into real poetry the reader will be grateful.

TO HIM

Who never wronged an enemy,
Who never did betray a friend,
Who held a mind in balance fine
For right to all—both friend and foe;
Among the wise, He was the wisest;
Among the true, He was the truest;
Among the brave, He was the bravest;
Among the meek, He was the meekest;
Among the good, He was the best,
And all could call Him "Brother"—"Friend;"
He wept with those He found weeping,
Rejoiced with those He found rejoicing,
He taught all men the Way of Life,
And went about to do all good.

THE EPIC OF JESUS

I

O MUSE Divine, If ever thou didst guide
The trembling flight of Sage or neophite,
Who durst to soar above Olympian Hill,
And fashion heavenly things in earthly song,
Command Urania, who was wont her aid
To lend those Bards of eld to see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight,
That me vouchsafe true passage, and return,
Though humbler be the path that I may tread,
The whilst attempting to recount somewhat
In measured lines that greatest Life on earth;
Or else the vision make me discontent,
And cause disdain for native element;
And Thou, O Spirit, guide my faltering steps,
Lest straying from Truth's bright and sacred path,
I make excursion into darkling ways,
Causing confusion more than giving light;
The rather may I join like-kindred minds,
And tell obediently to Thy command
Again the wondrous story of the Christ.

All day sweet Mary wrought and plied her task;
The distaff in her deftest hand flew fast,
As whitest wool or ripened hemp was changed
Into the stoutest thread of softest strands;

Then laid aside with gentlest care each hank,
From which the winter's garments would be made;
Nor respite had she none till evening shade—
Thrice welcome—put an end to daily toil.
Then lent she willing hands to nightly chores:
She from the distant well the water brought,
Till earthen jars and pots were brimming full;
The goats she milked, and folded lambs and kids;
She made the fire, and seethed the savory stew,
Brought forth the cheese and curd, and baked the cake,
And spread the board, and made the evening meal;
Replenished oil in waning lamp for light;
Unrolled the beds, and sleeping couch made down.
When all was done, to chamber she retired
To meditate and give herself to prayer.

At first she murmured soft a psalm of praise
In thankfulness for all Jehovah gives,
And offered up the prayer for Israel's peace,
That God would bring again from foreign strand
The chosen race to dwell in Canaan Land.
With all the house now quiet, disrobed for sleep,
She quenched the candle's flickering dim light.
But sleep had none, for holy thoughts ran on,
Recalling Jah-Jehovah's promise made:
"That one of virgin born should walk the earth,
Whose visage marred by sin, should know no sin,
Save as He sorrows bore for sinful men,
In tasting bitt'rest grief for their relief.
When should He come, this One, Messiah King?
And whose the high favor to give Him birth,
Attend His childhood needs, direct His path
Till manhood's rights deposed a mother's care?
How would the people know when He shall come,

And who acclaim Him Sovran of the realm,
And set Him King on David's ancient throne?"

Thus late in night indulging holy thoughts
She lingered, and from out her window watched
The silent stars pass o'er Judean hills.
At last her sweet orisons said she slept,
And as she sank in slumbers soft she dreamed.
There is a door hard by the gates of sleep,
Whose portals close not, but remain ajar
Long after rest to weary body comes;
Through these soft-footed visions oft emerge,
And often then before the soul appear,
In semblance of reality, such things
As once the waking mind contemplated.
Thus as the maiden mother of our Lord
Reposed in deepest slumber on that night,
An angel in a vision fair appeared,
And hailed her most blessed among her kind—
The one appointed for to bear the Seed
Of David, and be mother to our Lord.
And thus the angel spake: "Hail, thou Mary!
Most highly art thou favored of the Lord,
A chosen vessel guarded by His grace,
To which yielding willing hast grown to be
Most worthy of that which I now reveal:
Fear not, behold thou shalt bring forth a Son,
Who shall be great; His days shall know no end,
And He shall reign and govern Israel;
His name shall be above all other names;
Upon His shoulders shall rest the government;
The Prince of Peace, a mighty Counselor,
And nations by His wisdom shall be led;
In Him the ancient Promise be fulfilled,

And though by serpent He be bruised in heel,
Will in the end for man crush Satan's head."
The maiden softly stirred upon her couch,
One hand uplifted, with the other she
Pushed back the snow-white linen from her breast;
Her golden tresses tousling bout her head,
Her beauteous form more lithe than fabled Nymph,
And pulsing floodtide with maternal hope;
Her cheeks grown ruddy like the morning glow,
When opes Aurora portals of the dawn;
Now seems a-coming through the doors of sleep,
But waking not, she softly slumbers on.
And then a pleasing smile of virtuous joy
Played o'er her restful, frownless countenance,
As the Annunciation she received.
And there in heavenly vision rapt she prayed
With thankful heart that Heaven's will be done.
Though from her lips no whispered word, or sound,
Yet yielding full obedience in her dream,
She thought: "My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And now my spirit doth rejoice in God,
For He hath lifted His handmaiden up,
All generations now shall call me blessed,
So may Thy will, O God, be done in me!"

She rose to greet the morning fresh and sweet,
And to her task with singing heart she went,
But musing still what all the vision meant.
Again at eve when all her chores were done,
And to her chamber had retired alone,
She pondered o'er again the solemn dream;
Again the old Parchment brought forth and read:
Of "Virgin Mother," and "Messiah born
Of Jesse's Rod," how "Judah's Law-Giver

Would not depart till Shiloh should be come,"
And "David's Kingdom never have an end."

Thus oft from day to day, till late at night
Did Mary read and prayerfully peruse
The ancient Book to learn about the Son,
Until her mind and soul in rapture dwelt
To think that she to Him would Mother be.
No evil thought, or whim of dalliance
Intruded cross the threshold of her mind,
Nor heed she gave to village gossip round,
So meanly whispered of the coming day,
When pious Joseph should divorce his spouse.
But deep within her soul a holy joy,
Sweeter than chiming vespers filled her days,
And nightly Visions buoyed her confidence
That Heaven's Will to her would work no harm.
And trusting God she waited for her man
To come and bravely take her to himself;
Nor waited long, for soon across the hills
Came Joseph, lover true, his wife to claim.
No questions asked, no explanation made,
For both as happy entered now God's plans,
And gladly consummate the nuptial bans.

II

THE better that he tribute might exact
From all the conquered nations of the world,
Augustus Cæsar did proclaim decree,
By which the heads of every family
Were hence commanded to their native place
Repair, and there by law to be enrolled.
Obedient to imperial mandate sent

Did righteous Joseph and his wife Mary
Leave Nazareth, their home in Galilee,
And make the journey down to Bethlehem,
The city of David's nativity;
For Joseph's genealogy was there,
And his was lineage from Davidic line.

Long was the way, and journey wearisome,
Until at last they reached the public khan,
Where they refreshment sought and room to rest.
They were among the last of caravan
To reach the khan, and found no room therein;
For those who first arrived bespoke all room.
No plea that Joseph made, or offered price
Could room obtain for him and Mary there.
So tired and faint did Mary pine for rest,
Expectant, too, of motherhood, besought
Good Joseph that some place for her be found.
Again he asked the keeper of the khan,
And pleaded that some room for her be found:
"Long have we journeyed over hill and plain,
Till now the time since leaving Nazareth
Is measured by two holy Sabbath days;
All worn, I fear for thine haidmaid, my wife;
If only place for her may yet be found,
That she alone may rest and comfort have,
I will a place in manger seek with beasts,
And so we both shall pass the night in peace,
And on tomorrow find another place."
The kindly host could only make reply:
"All room is now by others occupied,
You must begone, and find some other place!"
But ere they went, did Mary whisper words
That filled Joseph with deep concern and fear,

For now he knew the fullness of her time
Was near at hand when should be born her Child.
Hard by the khan was manger kept for beasts
Of caravan, where provender was stored
Of straw and hay abundant for their need.
Here strangers, when no room in khan was found,
Might share with beasts the warmth of manger hay.
Here hither Joseph came with Mary sick,
And soon a couch of straw arranged for her,
Whereon she lay, the Queen of womankind,
The mother of our Lord—and Christ was born!
No skilled physician, nor yet midwife kind,
Assisted at accouchment of the child,
No candle burned with flickering light to aid;
But mother with her hands the Infant wrapped
In swaddling clothes, and in the manger laid.

III

All through the night serene the shepherds watched,
Nor left the flock a prey to prowling beasts.
'Twas duty's high behest that they should guard,
That from the fold no sheep, nor little Lamb,
Should stray in hill or copse or tangled wood,
And be found wanting from the morning count.
And through the weary night with no complaint,
Making dark vigil holy sacrament,
They watching waited for the coming morn.
But ere the light fell o'er Judean hills,
Or ran along the broad expansive plains,
Or walked upon the ridgy mountain-top,
A vision wonderful from heaven came:
Far high above hung round a choral cloud,
From out whose limning radiance they heard

The chanting Cherubim in cadence sing
Of God's good will to men and peace on earth.
Then forth stood Gabriel on the outer edge
Of the bright burnished cloud and to them said:
"Fear not, I bring glad tidings of great joy,
In which all nations of the earth shall share;
For there is born this day in Bethlehem
The Christ, the promised Child of David's seed."
And then all the host joined with him and sang:
"To God be glory in the highest heaven,
Among all men on earth let there be peace."
And richer far than hireling's golden wage,
Or yet ambition's honors, or valor's wreath,
Or diadem of kings and potentates,
Was Heaven's bestowal that night upon these men.
Then ere Aurora oped the gates of dawn,—
Before Hyperion's suffusing light
Bathed topmost cedars on high Lebanon,
Or flung his kisses shimmering afar
O'er all the hills and valleys down between,
Forth from the tented fields the shepherds came
To Bethlehem, and wrapped in swaddling clothes
They found the Holy Child, the infant Christ,
And bowed themselves in worship to the King,
Of whom they heard in field the angels sing.

IV

While yet the mother happy did rejoice
Over her firstborn Son, and to her breast
The Infant pressed, wise men from out the east
Came, guided by a strange new Morning Star,
To find and worship Judah's new-born King.
By day they stayed, and journeyed on by night,

Gazing with wonder at the moving light.
But scarce had they come near Jerusalem,
When lo! the Star had passed from out their sight.
Perplexed and saddened because they missed the Star,
They came into the city and inquired
Of men upon the street concerning Child:
"Where is He that is born King of the Jews?
For we have seen His Star shine in the east,
And journeying hence, we come to worship Him."
When this was told to Herod Idumean,
Usurper by intrigue of kingly rights,
He was troubled with all Jerusalem,
Lest revolution follow at the news.
For long had Israel waited for Messiah,
Whose right it was to sit on David's throne,
And by His power break off the Roman rule.
Such hope had kept them pacified till now.
But like the smoldering fires with power pent
Deep in the womb of earth await the time
When liaison of crust no longer holds,
To burst with fury forth in volcano;
So had the chosen People long endured
The baneful rule of Gentiles over them,
Waiting the time their foes to overthrow;
For in the sacred Rolls the Prophets spoke
Of time when the Messiah shall break their yoke.
Then Herod called together the Chief Priests
And all the Scribes, the Teachers of the Law,
Demanding where Messiah should be born.
And when they had the Scriptures searched, they said:
"We find that in the sacred Rolls is told
The place, but not the time, when shall appear
Messiah, David's Son to sit his throne:
For in the Book 'tis writ: 'Thou, Bethlehem

In Judah's land, the province of Ephratah,
Though thou art small, yet by no means the least
Among thy brethren, from thee shall come forth
The Prince and Ruler over Israel.' "

When Herod this had pondered long in mind,
With secrecy he summoned the wise men,
Communing with them sought to learn of them
The portent and the time the Star appeared.
And when they had rehearsed in full their rede,
While he in all detail inclining heard,
Spake kindly, and to them gave gifts, and said:
"Our Hebrew Prophets long ago hath told
Concerning things ye tell, and Him ye seek,
Who shall be king and in my room succeed.
My reign has prospered, and I have made the throne
More glorious than Solomon's golden age;
In splendor unsurpassing reared the Temple,
Kept peace and order mong the turbulent,
Have patiently waited the time to come,
When this new Prince on earth be born,
And I, in honors rich, in age advanced,
Might with reluctance none lay down the cares;
Divested thus might yield to His command,
And place the royal scepter in His hand.
Moreover this now seemeth heaven's decree,
Made doubly sure by portent ye reveal:
Go seek with diligence in Bethlehem
Until this Child ye find, where His abode?
His parents who? Their wealth? If guards they keep?
And what acclaim is made that He is King?
When all is noted down in full account,
Return, and hastening back bring word to me,
That coming I may also worship Him."

Departing thence the wise men made their way
From out Jerusalem to Bethlehem,
And from the city's gate their way they took;
Nor waited for the coming of the morn;
But out beneath the darkening skies and stars
At night along the lonely road they walked.
With ever watchful eyes upscanning sky,
They murmured soft a prayer to find the Star.
Then far out over hills they saw its beams;
Uplifted high the burning beacon rose
With glowing light and moved along the way
Until it stopped and stood above a cottage home;
Its sphering crimson shot soft saffron rays
In points of radiance downward on the roof
Where dwelt that night the holy family.
And seeing the Star they were exceeding glad,
For now they knew the holy Child was found.
And following on they came unto the house,
And calling woke the good man from his sleep.
Upon the threshold they good Joseph met,
And reverential making their salaam,
They asked of him to see the new-born King;
And when they saw the Child they worshipped Him,
Presenting gold and frankincense and myrrh.
And with their service ended they withdrew
To journey back unto Jerusalem,
And make report to Herod what they found.
When mind and heart be so attuned to hear
The cosmic note that beats in pulsing waves
Through all the universal mind's domain,
Wherein the Truth divine is oft revealed,
The Conscience then to man may be his guide,
And he by mystic leadership may choose
His way, and choosing find the way of right.

The wise men were not far upon the road
When sounding of a warning mystery
Their souls possessed, and cogitations deep
Awakened fear that they should not return,
Nor yet disclose to Herod what they found
Of Child and Family in Bethlehem.
This warning Voice they heard and turned aside,
And by another way departed home.

Now after days when wily Herod knew
By their delay the wise men had him mocked,
His wrath was kindled great and knew no bounds.
His officers to every port dispatched,
And set a watch in all the country round
To apprehend the wise men from the East,
And have them put to death for treachery.
Then swift armed men he sent to Bethlehem
With orders sealed to kill without delay
All children of the male, and spare not one,
Both in the town and all the region round,
Of two years old and under, since the time
When first the wise men journeyed from the East
To find and worship Judah's new-born King.
When this decree had been promulgated,
And all had been confirmed, the soldiers went
Their dastard bloody deed to perpetrate
In Bethlehem against the innocents,
King Herod summoned all of the Chief Priests
To gather forthwith in the royal court.
Not knowing what the import was they came
With sullen mind and gravest countenance,
To learn what next his evil mind decreed.
High on the royal throne then Herod sate,
Infirm with age, and weakened with disease,

His wizened countenance scowled down on Priests.
About him stood arrayed his Roman guard,
And at the door of palace soldiers watched.
When all was quiet, the chamberlain advancing
Bearing a golden chalice filled with drink,
Then bowing low first drank of its contents,
On bended knees the flowing bowl presents.
Assured by this that death lurked not in cup,
The feeble king did freely quaff the stuff,
As soon as copious wine had reached the blood
The lagging energy and spirit aroused,
Imagination fired, the fuming brain
Shook off its lethal pose, and tongue unloosed
Wagged forth in bitter hatred gainst the Priests:
"Again your machinations have been known,
And openly revealed your damning plot;
You wickedly have planned an uprising
Among the people, and overthrow the throne;
You breed sedition as the stagnant pool
Gives off malarial stench and death.
Zounds! know ye not I have but to command
My soldiers, and soon by the bloody sword
Rid me your plotting and worthless life,
And give the people rest from all this strife!
You caused to be reported far and wide
That in the neighboring town of Bethlehem
The lawful King of Israel now is born:
'Great David's Son!' 'Messiah!' 'Promised One!'
Whose right it is alone to sit the throne;
Ye hire 'Wise Men' from out the East to come,
The harbingers of your nefarious scheme:
Me have they mocked, betrayed my royal trust;
With vile contempt have disobeyed my word;
Now fled with hope to scape my venging sword,

Whom yet my faithful guards will apprehend,
And hang high up on gallows as Haman hung!"

The priests in silence sat and heard the king,
Whose voice now strong in challenge accents rose,
And anger through it all was manifest,
While fear and dread their cringing souls possest.
"Bring me more wine!" the raging Herod cried,
And when the cup had drained, he spake again:
"Ye think to trifle thus with majesty,
Ye silly fools! and set sedition afoot.
'A King!' 'A Child born King!' I still am KING!
My word is law in all this hateful land;
There yet remains the right of reigning king—
The right of might: Let him who hath the power
The scepter take, and let him keep who can.
Go, now, ungrateful wretches, find your King!
This Child so loudly heralded is dead,
By my decree and royal mandate slain,
The helpless victim of your perfidy;
And with Him all the children in Bethlehem.
Go mingle with the mothers of that town
Your wailing lamentations and your tears;
For Rachel weeps for all her children dead,
And has no comfort, for they are no more,
But lie now shrouded in their putrid gore!"
The king grew weak, he gasped, and looked around,
No longer raged nor uttered more a sound;
Attendants gathered round, the guard drew near,
While silence reigned, and all were filled with fear:
Then closed his eyes, his head sank on his breast,
As though from weariness he fain would rest.

The Chief Priests fearing greatly rose to go,

Nor tarrying longer fled the royal court,
And waiting not decorum of the place,
They hastily ran out upon the street.
Already news had come from Bethlehem,
And known the sorrow of the infants slain,
With all the people suffered of its pain.
Escaped the Priests soon knew and understood,
The murderous meaning what the king had spoke,
And sighed to think they bore such grievous yoke.
But soon the fainting king regains compose,
And glaring round on all he simply said:
"Antonius, lead me to my room and couch,
Lest they may think I faint into a slouch!"
And when he had been laid upon his bed,
He never more did rise, but soon was dead.
But ere he passed in wild delirium raged,
Less of a man and more of beast when caged;
With fever high and paroxysm of pain,
He murmured oft of children he had slain;
At times he seemed in heated argument,
When conscience lashed with punishment,
To void the crime, or offer for defense
What kings for wicked deeds their base pretence—
The saving of the crown and government.
But while he yet did linger with disease,
His hatred for the Jews increasing grew,
And more he meditated harm for them,
Until at last it was his royal word
That many of their nobles suffer death
Upon the day and hour he passed away.
For this he cozened them to visit him,
And shut them all within the hippodrome,
Then orders gave in secret to Salome,
His sister, vile as he, wife to Alexis,

That soldiers slaughter them when he had died.
Then bound himself by oath, and changed his will,
Bequeathing to her and her spouse the throne.
"Fear not," said he, "my purpose to fulfill,
Nor hear the chiding voice of conscience plead.
This noble deed of royalty may seem
At first to vile and common folk a crime,
But later all will come to offer praise.
Like jangling bells when vincinage is near
Give forth a raucus and unpleasant sound,
But far away they lose their dissonance,
And waft sweet melody to listening ear;
So creeping time, grown old enough, will take
From out the deed, now vile in sight of men,
Its pith and sting, and conscience so assuage,
That what to-day is monstrous to the mind,
Will in to-morrows be the righteous deed."

Not many more the days his end could stay,
Then passed this vile and bloating king away.
But sooner than the soldiers of the king—
Grim messengers of death to innocents—
Arrived that day in peaceful Bethlehem,
The angel Gabriel, who stands at God's right hand,
Was sent to warn the holy family,
And Joseph bid flee down in Egypt land,
The Child to save from Herod's rash command.
But when the wicked king had passed away,
And time elapsed that all forgot the Child,
Joseph returned and dwelt in Nazareth,
And here the Child grew up to be a man.

V

Jerusalem with towering walls of grey,
The city of great David, woke at dawn
To welcome many pilgrims from afar,
Who, in obedience to pious custom, came
Their holy vows to pay, and celebrate
Deliverance from Egypt's bondage vile.
A multitude encamped without the gates,
Whose chanting Psalms filled all the night
With joyful praise as from their tents they sang.
The full-orbed moon sprayed down her softest light,
The whispering wind sank in quiescent lull,
The air impregned with incense odorous,
Did lilting overleap the high grey walls,
And sifted down among the worshippers
Like benediction from the sacred shrine.
Full many a rede was told by aged men,
How God's Angel on that most awesome night
Passed over Goshen's plain in Egypt's land,
And slew the first born there of every kind,
But touched no child born in a Hebrew home.
From camp to camp forth wandered youths to hear
Again some Elder solemnly recite
This ancient rede of God's deliverance:
The lamb that on tomorrow they shall eat,
Whose blood upon the altar will be poured,
Would symbolize this wonderful event;
The bitter herb, unleaven bread, would tell
Of sorrows and shame in those bondage years,
In which they toiled and served the Gentile king;
Their sandaled feet, their garments girt about,
The covered head and staff in hand to go,
Remind of ample haste as they went out,

And spoiling those who had their masters been,
Prepared for journey through the wilderness.
All this, and more, the younger pilgrims heard
Their aged Sires repeat till late at night.
Thus down through the ages had the story run
Of what Passover meant to celebrate,
And ever keep in mind the Covenant
Which God Jehovah with their fathers made
When Moses led them up from slavery.

Among the saintly pilgrims of the camp
Came pious Joseph, with his wife Mary,
From Nazareth to keep the Passover.
They also brought along their son Jesus,
A lad of tender years, being but twelve.
From day to day along the weary way
He asked of parents many questions hard
Concerning of the journey and the throng;
For far advanced in wisdom had He grown,
More than one of His years, and quick to learn.
His mother answered some of questions asked,
Others too deep, she sighed and answered not,
But laid them up within her mother heart,
And wondered whence such knowledge on His part.
But He now more resolved to know these truths,
Within Himself determines soon to seek
The wise men in the Temple, and them ask
The answers which His mother could not give.

When scarce the rising morn with rosy light
Adorned the skies and quenched the stars of night,
The porters lifted bars and opened gates
To let the waiting pilgrims enter in.
With joyful shouts they now ascend the Hill,

On which their famous Temple long had stood,
And whither once a year the Tribes went up
To pay their vows, to worship, and to pray.
The Lad once in the city soon was lost
Among the surging throngs about the streets,
Or passed within the holy Temple courts.
Through all the days of convocation held
His parents thought Him safe with other lads,
Who roamed at will about the Temple grounds.

And when the days of ministration passed,
And caravans for homeward trek were formed,
The happy pilgrims took their journeys forth.
Many the times they stopped and backward looked
To catch a ling'ring view of whitened walls,
And see the City, and to chant its praise:
"If we forget Thee, O Jerusalem,
And tell not all thy glory in the land,
Let cleave our tongue unto the roof of mouth;
And if our strength we put not forth for Thee,
May our right hand forget its cunningness,
Jerusalem, the City of our God!"
Among the rest went Mary and Joseph,
But the Boy Jesus they had left behind,
Thinking Him safe the while with their kinsfolk.
Meanwhile the Lad of twelve in Temple sat
Conversing with the Doctors and the Scribes,
Confounding them by gravest questions asked,
And answering all with wisdom they did ask.
Here after three days searching Him they found,
And for the sorrow Mary chided Him,
Which she supposed that He to them had brought,
Whom missing they returned and long had sought.
How oft before in other days this Child

In acts and words displayed among His kin
Such wisdom that revealed His origin,
We do not know, the record tells us not,
But may we not believe that Mary wot,
And now for one brief moment understood
Her Son as Scribes and Doctors never would.
"Why hast thou sorrowing sought afar for me?"
He said: "Thou know'st alone as yet my work.
Where else should I a faithful Son be found,
Except it be within my Father's house?
Or what of work my mind and hand engage,
Unless it be His business to attend?"
The answer given Mary meek accepts,
And with no other words she leads Him forth
From Temple, and from out His Father's house.
Then down to Nazareth with them He went,
And was in all things subject unto them,
For which He favour had with God and man.
Of children most obedient and true,
In stature and wisdom He daily grew.

VI

Now days had grown to weeks and months and years,
And much of change had come o'er all the land.
The people soon forgot the wondrous Child,
And all of heaven's portents and signs to show
What manner of child He was born to be.
His mother only kept stored up in heart,
As she watched Him grow up to man's estate,
These things so wonderful of former years.

Another child six months before was born
Named, John, whose father was priest Zachariah,

Whose mother was the good Elizabeth.
Now both were waxed in years when John was born,
And passed away ere he to manhood came.
No home had he in all his youthful years,
No mother's watchful care to guide his steps,
But left alone he roamed in wilderness.
Here locust and wild honey were his food;
His coat a raiment made from camel's hair,
And held with leathern girdle bout his loins.
But there in solitude he found his soul
Aflame with thoughts of the Messiah King;
For God did him anoint to preach His truth,
And voice to him was given to cry aloud
That all men everywhere should now repent,
For Heaven's Kingdom was approaching nigh.
Till then no friend had he, nor foes had made;
His dwelling-place apart in wilderness,
Where none of men had fellowship with him.
And in the clefts of rocks he made his home;
By day he loitered here in solitude,
By night he walked beneath the stars and prayed,
Holding communion with his father's God
Until day of his manifesting came.
The whispering winds to him companions were,
And in their soughing notes he heard a voice
Commanding that he show himself abroad
As Prophet and Forerunner of the King.
The stars at night conjoined to make him sure
That time had come to make his message known;
A spirit burned within his fiery soul
To bear to Israel the heavenly news
That Kingdom of their God was now at hand.
Then forth he came a voice in wilderness,
And preached the Gospel of God's righteousness.

Hard by the Jordan's profluent stream he stood,
And in the spirit of Elijah preached.
Then went out unto him Jerusalem,
And all Judea, and all the region round,
To see and hear, perchance to be baptized,
If he would deign accept confession made,
And minister to them the holy rite.
And when the Scribes and Pharisees inquired
What they must do to enter in and share
The Kingdom he proclaimed to be at hand,
He blazed on them his fiery eyes and said:
"Ye hypocrites, Ye vipers full of gall!
Who hath warned you to flee the wrath to come?
If ye sincere would know what God demands,
And would in diligence keep His commands,
Then heed and keep the law of His Kingdom:
If ye two coats may have, your brother none,
Then ye in charity impart the one;
If food abundant in thy house is found,
Then have compassion on the poor around;
For as the rivers flow into the sea,
And yet the sea is never full withal,
But day by day doth yield the floods received
In mist converted to replenish clouds,
Which in their turn drop down to earth in rain,
Making it bring forth food for man and beast;
So ye, in compensation must yield back,
In just proportion, blessings ye receive,
And likewise share your bounty cheerfully,
Or else the surfeit work you injury.
Ye gatherers of tax must not extort;
Ye soldiers do no wrath of any sort,
Nor wrongfully exact another's goods,
But be content to serve for wages paid.

Bring forth all ye fruits meet for penitence;
And think ye not some other way to come,
Nor deem yourselves the chosen Seed of God
Because of father Abraham alone,
For God, the Lord, is able of these stones
To raise up children unto Abraham."
And thus the Baptist preached from day to day,
Baptizing in the Jordan all who came
Making a good confession of their sins.

VII

And while John thus exhorted all who came,
Baptizing those who did their sins confess,
And warning all to flee the wrath to come,
The people pondered whether he was Christ,
If not, then whose the office he did bear?
And whose authority commanded him?
Then John denied, but boldly did confess
That his was only preparation work—
A "Voice" crying in wilderness: "Prepare
Ye the way of the Lord, Make straight His paths:
The Christ is coming after me, whose shoes
I am not worthy stooping to unloose,
And lo! He now is standing in your midst.
And throughly He will cleanse His threshing-floor,
The wheat into the garner He will bring,
But chaff will burn with fire unquenchable."

John searched from day to day the face of all
Who came and asked for baptism at his hand,
And watched for dove descending when baptized,
For this was sign to him that he might know
Messiah coming with the multitude.

Then lo! one day among all the people
That lined the banks of Jordan's rolling stream,
To see and hear the strange new prophet preach,
Came Jesus from His home in Nazareth.
And drawing near He signified to John
His willingness to be baptized of him.
Then did the prophet's stern mien milder grow,
And on his brow a softening light did glow;
His stormful voice sank into quietness,
And soon his boldness all became meekness.
He bowed himself, and Jesus thus bespake:
"O Master, let me now confess my sins,
For I have need to be baptized of Thee,
And comest Thou, the Lamb of God, to me?
I long have wished this hour, Thy face to see,
Now Lord, baptize first me, then I will Thee."
To whom Jesus did make answer most kind:
"Nay, but the servants must their Lord obey,
Thine office was appointed thee for this,
And mine to reach Messiah perfectness,
Must learn obedience with those who serve,
Thus we shall both fulfil all righteousness."
The parley done, down into water walked
The Prince of Life, and he, of woman born,
Than whom no greater man hath ever lived.
The people saw them wading Jordan's flood,
But the deep import little understood.
A skirting cloud the face of mid-day sun
Now gently veils, through which the darting rays
In opalescent light fell o'er the scene,
The moving muffled wind grew strangely soft,
The mildly swishing waters rippled past,
A lone bird perched nearby atop a tree
Trilled soft in silvery notes accompaniment,

As in the flood their way they push,
While on the people fell a holy hush.
Mid stream they pause, and in the sight of all
John plunged that blessed form beneath the waves,
Which rushing over buried Him from sight;
Again from out the water raised Him up:
Of death and our entombment emblem fit,
And equally the resurrection morn.
While yet the people watched, and John amazed,
As on Jesus he saw the heavenly Sign
Descending and abiding like a dove,
Cried out: "Behold, this is the Lamb of God,
Of whom I spake, Who takes away your sins!"

The Master having offered prayer emerged
From out the stream, and hastening left the scene,
And set His face hard toward the wilderness.
The Spirit drave, compelling Him to go,
That He might test His Messianic claim.
Though Son of God, He yet was son of man,
And being found in fashion as a man,
He must temptation as a man endure,
And through obedience make perfect faith,
That man by faith in Him might perfect be.
'Twas man in Him alone could be tempted,
For God cannot be tempted, nor doth He
Tempt any man from rectitude to sin.
It is the Evil One who seeks man's fall;
And with conspiracy and testy wrath
He seeks through sin to overwhelm the race,
Then sin brings sorrow, death, and banishment,
But God no pleasure takes in punishment.

VIII

Amid the throng that day on Jordan's bank
Had skulked unseen the Enemy of man,
And watched with malice and scornful glee,
When John baptized the Man of Galilee.
But seeing the sign descending like a dove,
And hearing the Voice majestic speak above,
Declaring Jesus the "Beloved Son,"
He sped the place, and frantic through the air
Swift rushed his courier-spirits summoning
From the four corners of the globe to hell
His emissaries over earth deployed,
In convocation called that new designs
Be formed, and circumventing plans be laid,
How best undo high Heaven's prophetic work
By else destroying outright this new Man,
Or by seduction wile caused Him to sin
And hold Him captive thrall as rest of men.
When all the direful crew in hell arrived,
Up spake Satan, and all the band accused:

"Ye Spirits damned! What mockery wrought!
How failed ye utterly my high command,
Which I enjoined when first this Man was born,
That by some scheme invented Him destroy,
Lest living He in time should mock our work,
And put to open shame all we have done,
And set at naught the vict'ry we have won!
But failed ye miserably in Bethlehem
When tempting Herod he the infants slew,
But the avenging sword touched not this One,
Who lives and hath to man's estate upgrown,
Now honored and called by God "Beloved Son."

Unless some mightier deed by us performed
That yet shall matched His sacrificial work,
And bring His purpose high in disrepute,
And cause men His salvation to reject—
In time when He is fully manifest,
Earth's fair domain from out our hands will wrest,
And all our work destroy, and man restored
Will reign again where now is felt our sway;
And by His sovran will (who here can tell)
Command us bound and broken back to hell,
To burn therein, shut with unquenchable fire,
The satisfaction for celestial ire."

Then offered fast and furious those Imps of hell
The schemes they deemed, and all devices fell,
To circumvent and thwart high Heaven's plan
And bring to naught Redemption's work for man.
Some thought to strike Him down with dread disease:
His body so infect that death ensue,
And so remove from off the earth His life.
Some: Him possess with demoniacal rage
And spirits all unclean to dwell in Him,
With countenance distorted, mind inane,
To render Him so loathsome and profane
That Saviour none of men will Him accept.
Some said: ensnare Him by seductive wiles;
In dandling beauty let the purpose hide,
Till all voluptuous passions rise flood-tide,
With music sweet, enamoring strains to dull
Restraint, increasing appetite to make
Desire incontinent, and yielding take
What conscience, righteousness, and Law forbid.
And others yet would natural forces use:
Unleashing winds and lightnings in the storm,

And set their deadly aim against His life;
Or by earthquake and fire combust the day
Relentless, till His life be taken away.
Then spake the Chiefest Fiend, and spurning said:

"Ye must remember He is more than man;
As man He has all man's propensities,
But with His manhood Deity is so conjoined
As makes Him more than man, nor less of God,
To give discretion to dispose desire,
That naught of superfluity may abound,
Without which no transgression can ensue;
Yet of requirement never falling short
By overt act, nor lacked conformity
One jot or tittle of Justice' strictest rule.
He having never yet committed sin,
Death by disease or violence can make
No end of His incarnate life on earth;
For where sin hath not done its deadly work
Death cometh not, and hath no power to take.
But should He live, and His probation serve
Without defect, nor least defect of sin
Be found in Him—in thought, in word, or deed,
And then shall offer up His blameless life
The ransom for the sinful race of man,
And by His own consent tastes death for all,
Making propitiation for their sins,
Though on a Roman cross is crucified,
He then will triumph and be justified.
But such a victory is yet unwon,
And keep unconsummate our duty here.
Our task is Him beguile, doubt so foment
That manhood in Him quail and hesitate
The high adventure He doth meditate:

Once hesitation shakes His human will,
Devoiding faith with doubt usurpative,
Perfection then required for Saviourhood
Is doomed, and doomed the power to cope with sin.
Or else to put in jeopardy His trust
So as by fear to force presumption bold
To call in question Providence to keep
In danger all who put their trust in God,
Lest falling dash their foot against a stone.
And if so far He foil our guileful tests,
Then Him upbraid with his sphere mendicant,
Of poverty's pain, unrelenting sore,
Or scorn for goodness purchased at such price;
Then all the glory of the earth reveal
In dazzling splendor for reviewing eye,
The riches, ease, and all of fame renown,
The kingdoms, thrones, and all the potentates,
All these bestow a fief perpetual,
To have, to hold, enjoy to full extent,
Upon Him, the sole Monarch of these realms
Save one, in dignity though not surpassed,
Yet once, and only once, must falling down
Do homage unto me, and thus proclaim
Our high estate, whilst equally we reign.
If so be it that He is moved by this,
And for one moment harbors in His soul
Desire to have what God hath Him forbid,
Then hath He failed, our work is made complete,
Our kingdom safe, and man our lawful prey.
But since ye utterly me failed in first
Attempt, not now into your faithless hands
Commit I this high task to circumvent
Messiah's downfall, and His work prevent.
Far subtler means for this must be employed,

And one embued with watchful vigilance
And fixed determination unrelaxed
Until accomplished full complete the work.
Be mine alone the task to cope His strength
With seasoned wiles, and art to match a God.
Yet ye some aid may be by searching far
Until His hiding habitat be found;
For now absconded, He eschews the haunts
Of men, and in some secret place employs
The time the better fit Him for His work.
Hence, whence, and where from nether pole to top,
Both eastward, westward; north and south, go search
In cave, in grotto, or in desert wild,
Mid ice and snow, or under tropic sun,
Cease not diurnal quest, nor night quench zeal
Unto the utmost bound, till He be found."

He ended, and the spirits all subservient
Dared not protest their lord, nor answer make
To change by adding aught, nor least subtract,
But bowing low obsequious gave consent.
Then from the hithermost to farthest bounds,
Swift as light rushes over all the earth
Sped on their evil quest to find our Lord.
But far outstripping, Satan led the van,
And soon in wilderness espied the Man.

IX

And whither led His path the Lord chose not,
But hastening on beyond the haunts of man,
Far in the pathless region made His way,
Till sun was set, and night had closed the day.
How dismal all about the loneliness!

No tuneful sylvan pipes enchanted night,
Nor fragrant winds to fan the desert's air;
No murmuring brook with its glad sounding note
The dull monotony of long hours broke;
No singing bird with happy roundelay
Made cheerful the long vigil He must hold.
Long were the nights, and hot the burning days,
In all the barren waste of wilderness,
His sole companions the wild prowling beasts.
But He recked not, so rapted in heavenly thoughts,
Of place, or time, or heat, or cold, or beasts;
Nor hunger felt for forty days and nights;
So much may spirit dominate the flesh,
That in abeyance common needs are held.
At last the time appointed was complete;
Celestial rapture coming to an end,
His mortal needs revived and hunger came.
But naught He found in all that barren waste
His hunger to relieve, or thirst assuage:
No spreading tree dropped down deciduous fruit,
Nor friendly bush a ripened berry bore,
Nor climbing vine empurpling clusters held;
No honey found, nor locus as did John,
When he was wont these wilds to wander o'er.
Grim nature now withdrew all kindliness,
And left Him lonely, thirsty, hungry sore!

But long He waited not, for Satan soon
Appears, and muses why God's only Son
Should in these wilds be left so desolate.
Awhile in silence Satan watches Him,
Marks well His haggard looks, His weary eyes,
Perhaps hears Jesus praying for relief.
Then boldly the arch fiend the Son accosts:

"If the Son of the Most High God thou art,
Why languish here in pain and hunger sore
When but a word will plenty bring, and more?
All power in heaven and earth is in Thy hand,
Whate'er Thou wilt, Thou hast but to command;
Yea, more than this belongeth to the Son,
For as Thy faintest wish, so shall it be—
If Thou beest the Son, and not mere man.
All things are Thine in heaven and on earth,
For of the Son so hath it been declared:
All things that are, were for Him created,—
All thine, to have, to use, and to enjoy,
If Thou beest the Son and not mere man!
This stone among the eldest things on earth
Would in obedience to Thy merest wish
Become the wholesome bread, the staff of life,
Relieve Thy hunger and renew Thy strength.
'Tis wrong to suffer here—and more: 'tis sin!
Since to endure when Thou mightest improve
Is but inflicting on Thyself a wrong,
And so far forth the author of a sin.
To wrong others is wrong, and sin indeed;
When wronged by others, the wronged may endure
The pain, but not the culpability;
To wrong Thyself is doubly wrong, and sin;
For Thou art then both wilful transgressor,
And on Thyself inflicts a needless pain.
Come, surely Thou hast not bethought Thyself:—
Who art, and what authority possess,
To here abide in thirst and hunger stark,
When Thou mightest command the choicest fruit
From the Ægean plains, and spices sweet
To render toothsome Babylonian dish;
The steamy, savory flesh of Goshen kine,

The flowing milk from fattest herds of goats,
And bread from Esdraelon's wavy fields;
The rarest vintage from Ephraim's winepress,
And honey from the craggy Hybla heights;
Thou mightest summon Orpheus' blandest notes
To while the gladsome festal hours away;
And tripping Diana with naiads and nymphs
To grace the sumptuous board with beauty round;
Thou might'st here in the desert wild create
A garden fairer far than Eden's vale,
Where happy dwelt once Thy progenitors,
With winds perfumed, stealing from flower to flower,
And murmuring brooks whose wanton song would lull
To rest when weary and satiated
With pleasures and feasting incontinent.
If Thou beest the Son of Most High God,
Command this stone that it shall be made bread,
And eat that nature shall be satisfied."

And having finished Satan vanished quite,
As spirits wish when wont to pass from sight,
Leaving a gusty wind that circling sighed,
Then passing into lonely silence died.
Now day was gone, and night drew on apace,
And such a night! Since first the brooding Voice
O'er Erebus did sound that first command:
"Let there be light," its pulsing rays farwent
Diffusing Helios' strength to confounding
Chaos, and dispossessed the Stygian right
To hold unsounded night o'er all the earth;
But still again the inky waves roll back,
When light withdraws attending other spheres,
To repossess with thrice double dark the loss,
And, save where moon and stars unclouded guard

Contending with a lesser light, she rules.
Such was this night, with murky clouds above,
Through which no faintest ray of moon or stars
Could struggling down illumine wilderness.
Naught here but darkness now impenetrable,
With loudly roaring winds ripping about
The ebon rocks, and beasts ferocious wild,
Whose raucus cries vied with the noisy winds,
To make the hideous place more hideous still.
All through the long night Jesus bode alone,
Exposed to hostile elements and beasts,
Not knowing which would first claim Him a prey
Till He again with thankful heart saw day.
Fatigued, forlorn, and spent, He welcomed dawn,
Though pitiless the sun sent down its rays,
And the hot winds gave no surcease from heat.
His thirst unquenched, His hunger unappeased,
Amazed He waited for the Spirit's word
Before He set His face the homeward way.
Thus desolate He waited through the day;
Sometime in deepest thought of this sore test;
At others recalling what Satan said
That He command the stone to be made bread,
Which thought intensified His hunger pain,
And brought desire for food with force again.
Again the Imp approached and wily said:
"The way back from this dismal wilderness
Is long, and many hours will be required
To traverse the path and arrive at home;
You will need strength, and for this you must eat.
Thy fast is ended and Thy vigil kept,
Why tarry longer here? departing go
From this dread place to Thy loved Nazareth.
If Thou beest the Son and not mere man,

Command this stone that it shall be made bread,
And eat and Thou shalt have strength for the way."

Though faint and weak as man from fast long kept,
Yet keen in knowledge and the scent of God,
Our Saviour quick discerns the Evil One,
And knows full well the ancient foe of man—
Foe of God, and all good, and righteousness—
Who by seduction brought sin in the world,
Together with all sin's dire consequence;
Sees too the deep and hellish purpose through
To consummate the Daysman's downfall here,
And so perpetuate the doom of man:
If by insinuation he may doubt
Foment but for one moment in the heart
Of man's Redeemer, all will then be lost!
If by the slightest yielding He obey,
Concurrent with evil suggestion made,
The perfect righteousness required to save
Is marred! then plan divine has gone awry,
And earth and man remain a moral wreck.

But Jesus willing yet to stand the test
Required His Saviourhood to manifest,
Submits in parley to engage Satan:
" 'Tis true, I am the Son of God, and sent
By Love into this world man to redeem,
And keeping Law, and teaching way of Life,
And by my sacrifice atonement make
For all mankind by bearing all their sins,
Will so undo what erstwhile thou hast done,
And fully man restore impeccable,
Making him meet to dwell again with God.
Some part that work, I here must undergo

Temptation as a man, and learn thy wiles,
And keep God's Law complete for man."
Then answers He Satan in holy Writ:
"Man shall not live by bread alone," He said,
"But by each word spoke from the mouth of God."
The devil all abashed the Saviour heard,
And knew his well laid plan was understood.

X

Though Satan was abashed, he lingers still
With evil hope the Son of God to tempt,
And by one act of disobedience fall,
As fell the first progenitors of man.
He summons now the natural elements
To aid his wicked and nefarious plan.
Again night came down on the wilderness,
And Jesus seeking refuge found a rock,
Whose hanging ledge a friendly grotto formed,
Wherein He sought protection from the beasts
And the dank chilling air of the long night,
With hope to mitigate His suffering plight.
From whence at earliest dawn the Son emerged,
Still hungry, weary and forlorn, He walked
Abroad, waiting to hear the Spirit's call,
And what the test this day would Him befall.
Soon far over the heated rocks He heard
Approaching a whirlwind with deafening roar;
The moment next Himself was caught and borne
Aloft, and swept along with lightning speed
O'er city, mountains, village, fields and plains,
And light as feather set Him down unhurt
Upon the Temple's topmost pinnacle.
No spiral stairs from His precarious perch

Offered descent far down to solid earth;
So narrow the ledge that He scarcely found
A place to balance and to rest His feet.
While clinging hard with palms the beetling side,
Each moment seems the last before He falls,
Sheer down the distance to the rocks below,
He offered prayer, and asked for help to come
And rescue Him from this precarious plight.
Beyond and on another pinnacle
He sees Satan sitting, and hears him say:
"If Thou art Son of God, why do you fear?
Is it not written, God hath His angels charged
Concerning Thee, and in their hands they bear
Thee up, lest 'gainst a stone Thy foot be dashed?
Let go Thy hold, if Thou doubtest not God,
(And surely not, if Thou art Son of God)
Fear not, believe and cast Thyself now down,
And let the angels bear Thee soft to earth;
Thus prove Thyself Son, and Thy Father God."

With ready answer Jesus makes reply:
"Vain all thy thoughts, and wholly wrong thy speech
Concerning ways of Providence for man
To aid him when he puts his trust in God.
Should it please God to put man to the test
That by temptation man may stronger grow,
With fortitude man then should bear the test,
Believing where he cannot understand.
It is true, and it ever will be true,
That God provides against the need of man,
And succors him who puts his trust in God,
And to His angels gives He charge to keep,
Lest man may dash his foot against a stone.
But to doubt God, and by presumption seek

To prove true what Almighty saith is true
Is but perversion of the truth declared.
By such presumption thou didst fall headlong
From thy position exalted down to hell,
And with thee many other spirits fell—
Those angels who kept not their first estate,
And now reserved in everlasting chains
Await in darkness coming judgment day.
Thou hast said truly what the Scriptures tell
Concerning me: 'God hath His angels charged
To bear thee up, and suffer not thy foot
In falling to be dashed against a stone.'
But more is written than your quote hath told;
Thou dost pervert by leaving out the whole,
Which makes thee here dishonest as of old,
Revealing thee playing the same old rôle.
What God hath said besides in Holy Writ
Is this: 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God!'"

XI

Now Satan takes Him high up mountain peak,
From whence He saw the glories of the world,
Displayed in panoramic dazzling view,
Wherein the might and tyranny of man
Upreared in gorgeous splendor cities great,
With mansions, temples, fanes, and Parian streets,
Created and to be created yet,
Since Babel's tower rose on Shinar's plain,
And men in speech confounded disagreed,
And spread o'er earth, and nations came to be;
Thrones, Potentates, and Principalities,
With conquering armies that surpassed the host
That mighty Xerxes led at Helespont;

And chief among the rest Jerusalem
With David's throne, and no king sat thereon!

"All that Thou seest," said Satan, "is mine own,
Created by my power, to have and hold,
The earth, the silver, precious stones and gold,
To use, to keep, enjoy, or to destroy;
The multitudes of people too are mine;
They owe and give allegiance sole to me;
At my command they wage war, or make peace;
They build temples in which to worship me;
My priests and altars are in every land,
And there are none who dare my rights dispute;
And none are equal here with me to reign,
Save him to whom it pleases me to share.
Since God hath cast Thee off, denied Thy right,
Exiled Thee to earth with all its sorrows,
And fashioned Thee the poorest of mankind,
And left Thee hungry, unattended here,
Though Prince in heaven and co-equal with God,
Rebel as I have done, challenge His might!
Defy Him to His face; and come with me;
Fall down for once only and worship me,
And all this glory I will give to Thee;
We shall twin Monarchs reign o'er all the earth,
And Thou shalt sit Thy father David's throne."
To whom our Lord indignantly replied:
"Get thee behind me, Satan, vilest wretch!
For in the Scriptures has it not been writ:
Thou shalt bow down and only worship God,
And service to Him only shalt thou give?"

Then like a gleaming sword the Saviour's words,
Which can alone cope with, and put to rout

When gainst incorporal spirits contending,
Struck Satan midriff, and did hurl him back
Adown the precipice and far below.
Thus from our Lord he parted for a time,
But bitter still, and still more rancorous
Against mankind and Christ the Son of God,
Contrived with devilish malice to destroy
Both Jesus and the race He came to save.

Forthwith the lofty air vibrates with songs
Celestial, and a host of angels come,
Descending on an opalescent cloud,
And form a wingy circle round Jesus.
But long they tarried not, but passed,
And bearing back with them the Son of God,
On pinions easy through th' ethereal blue,
Thrice swift as eagle's flight before the storm,
Hard by the rock where Jesus refuge sought
That stormful night from beasts and elements,
Where whilome Satan Him at first had found.
But soon this desolate region was changed
To pleasing place for weary man to rest,
In all that eye and ear and mind might wish,
So beautiful no place on earth was like
Since Eden's bowers bloomed in Paradise.
The heated air around grew temperate,
The wild waste to irriguous valley changed,
Majestic trees in pleasing prospect stood
Row after row in all the pleasant vale,
And fragrant winds in softest motion stirred,
Through lofty galleries and pendent leaves;
A grassy sward beneath instead of rocks,
And blooming flowers exhaling perfume sweet,
Meandering brooklets with low murmuring songs

That mingled with the quiring birds aloft;
In lilting laziness the zephyrs fanned,
Whose dulcet notes enchant the dullest ears;
And fruits delicious hung from vine and tree.
And soon a loaden board with wholesome food,
Of fruits, pulse, bread, and venison savory,
And milk and cheese and honey with the comb,
Appeared in all needed varieties
In right digestible proportion served,
A banquet with angelic seneschals,
And He the guest with heavenly visitants.
Here once again appeared on earth a spot
As God intended when creating it,—
A paradise meet for man's dwelling place,
With nature yielding free all he could wish
In food and drink, and beauty all around;
Salubrious clime and vernal atmosphere,
With ambient airs low murmuring everywhere.
With heavenly visitants as ministers,
And converse sweet throughout the happy time,
Did Jesus feast, and soon His strength regain.
That night the angels Him a couch prepared
Within a rosy bower for rest and sleep,
Befitting for the conquering Son of Man.
His perfect manhood unimpaired by sin,
His deity conjoined with that manhood
Needs must recuperate full strength in sleep.
He here recumbent soon forgot the days
Of sore temptation and the test endured,
While Nature's balm wrought full her gracious work.
At earliest dawn He woke to find all changed!
Gone were the angels, gone the garden and trees,
Gone all the singing birds with music sweet,
Gone all flowers, and all the streams gone dry;

The fragrant air to blistering wind was changed;
The bower gone, and downy couch turned stone,
And He in wilderness was all alone!

XII

He left this dreadful place and journeyed thence
In haste, back to the place from whence He came.
And as He went the Spirit filled His soul,
And a new Power of Wisdom came to Him,
Whereby He knew the time had now arrived
For Him to work redemption for the race.
First, He reached Jordan where He was baptized.
Once more the thronging multitude He saw,
That came each day to see and hear John preach;
Heard too John's solemn words of prophecy:
"Behold the Lamb of God that takes away
The sin of all the world, of Whom I spake:
'He must increase, but I must now decrease.'"
Again He journeyed back to Galilee;
And with Him some disciples gained from John,
Who heard John speak, and left to follow Him;
And with these others came and formed a band,
Whom He Apostles called, whose names are these:
Simon, called Peter, Andrew, James and John,
And Philip, Thomas and Bartholomew,
And Matthew, James, the son of Alphæus,
And Thaddæus, Simon, the Canaanæan,
And also Judas, called Iscariot.

With these He journeyed round the villages,
And taught the people in their synagogues.
At first they heard His words with great delight,
And multitudes were glad to follow Him.

And seeing them He sat upon a hill,
While all the people gathered round to hear.
Then opened He His mouth and taught them thus:
"Blessed the humble! they shall reign with God;
Blessed the mourners! they shall be consoled;
Blessed the meek! they shall possess the earth;
Blessed those seeking right! they shall find it;
Blessed the merciful! they shall have mercy;
Blessed the poor in heart! they shall see God;
Blessed those who have persecution borne
For Goodness' sake! The Kingdom shall be theirs.
And when they persecute and you revile
For righteousness' sake, greatly then rejoice,
And be exceeding glad, for your reward
In heaven shall then be exceeding great.
As such ye are indeed the salt of earth,
And ye shall be the light of this dark world."
While long He taught, yet none did weary grow,
And all bore witness that His words were so.
He spake with lips of grace the golden truths,
That soothed the fainting heart, imparting strength;
And pleasing like a breath of incensed air,
Inclined the minds of men to holy thoughts.
His voice was like an instrument when struck
By master's hand, vibrating with his soul,
Who feels the glory of his music first,
Then other hearts fills with its melody.
And trembling faith grew strong courageously
To venture on and walk the path unseen,
And found a strange new Light illumed the way,
A light far brighter than the shining day.
And love was kindled in the souls of men,
As joyful as a cloudless morn in May.
His theme was ever Faith and Hope and Love;

So gently did He plead, and yet so strong,
That little children came and gladly heard,
And elders from Him did not turn away.

XIII

THEN came the season of Passover Feast,
And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
One day He came into the Temple court,
And saw the place where merchants bought and sold,
Making their traffic in the House of God—
Saw sheep and oxen sold for sacrifice,
And heard the hucksters crying doves for sale,
Saw money changers seeking to extort,
By charging usury to worshipers.
And seeing all His kindling wrath waxed hot,
At desecration of His Father's House.
And while His indignation hotly burned,
He made a scourge of cords and drove them out,
And did the money tables overturn,
And wrathfully poured out the clinking coins.
Reproaching them He spake condemning words:
"These things take hence, make not my Father's house
A place of merchandise; for it is said,
And hath been written in the Word of God:
'My house shall be for all the house of prayer,'
But ye have made of it a den of thieves."
The traffickers were now aroused, and asked
By what authority He did these things?
He turned and said to them reproachfully:
" 'Tis not that ye neglect the sacrifice,
As once your sinful fathers did of old;
Today your altars reek with blood of beasts;
No price demanded but ye gladly pay

That all the world may know your charity;
You laughingly throw sheckles to the crowd,
And make a holiday for poverty;
Then chant with pious notes your Te Deum,
And post o'er land and sea, both far and near,
That men may know your deeds of righteousness;
Your temple stands, whose fame to heav'n ascends,
Your learned priests discourse on Moses' Laws,
Or else they talk of civil government;
You have your feasts, new moons and Sabbath days,
You talk of schemes and plans for betterment,
And prophesy the golden age to come;
But know: that which of men God most requires,
And far above all else they think or do—
The ancient sacrifice of His delight—
Is broken spirit and the contrite heart—
Destroy this temple if you wish, and will,
And I will raise it up within three days!"
Such claims did fill the hearers with surprise,
And scornfully they made reply and said:
"This Temple was in building forty years,
And wilt Thou raise it up in just three days!"
But He referred to His own body here,
And was not speaking of their Temple there.
In vain have men by disquisition sought
To fathom deepest things of man and God,
In vain by man's tradition ceaseless taught
What life should be, and duty to his God.
But life—full Life—begins within the soul;
When by the Light that comes down from above
The soul is new created by God's love.
This Light was He, incarnate Son of God,
Who takes away the darkness from the soul,
And by imparting truth revives the whole.

This daily Jesus, while attending feast,
Did teach the people and expound the truth
In Temple court, and wrought some signs to prove
Whose Son He was, and power by which He worked.
When now the lingering rays of setting sun
Reminded worshipers the day was done,
They from the Temple and its courts withdrew,
Repairing to their places of abode
Where they might find them comfort, rest, and food.
The Master too withdrew to find a home
With friends who offered hospitality.

While yet the night was young, and Hesper ruled
The evening sky, a Ruler of the Jews,
Named Nicodemus, who did love the truth,
Hearing in Temple Jesus teach that day,
Came that he might learn more of this new way.
Him Jesus did receive, and thus they talked:
"Rabbi, we know that Thou didst come from God,"
The proud Ruler from Jewry's council said,
"And Thou a Teacher art of things divine,
For no man can these signs do that Thou dost,
Except God be with him, and give him power.
This day in Temple court I heard Thee speak,
And more of truth I come this night to seek."
Then Jesus answer made, and to him said:
"Thou seekest truth, thy quest's a worthy one,
Then if the truth thou wouldst pursue, now hear:
In truth, except a man be born again
God's Kingdom he can never truly see,
Even though he be a learned Pharisee."
Such words to Nicodemus brought no light,
But more the truth confounded in his sight.
Said he: "Good Master, you astound me much;

How can a man when old be born again?
Such talk with Nature's law is variant,
And for such thing man is impuissant."
These two so closely drawn in purpose bent,
Each loving Truth, and wished to be obedient
To her demands, and follow in her way,
Yet differed more by far than night from day.
The Pharisee so deeply conversant
With Moses' Law, and Rabbin's caveling cant,
Was bound by letter of the things he knew,
And little understood these things so true;
The other, son of man, and Son of God,
Knew all that wisest men had ever known,—
Knew more—knew all the spiritual verities,
And would in truth these things reveal to men.
Despite his prejudice and ignorance,
Did Jesus strive the darkness to dispel,
And would the truth to Nicodemus tell.
The while both sat perplexed, and pondered much;
The one, the mystery of what was said,
The Other, how He best could make it plain,
Without they heard the sounding voice of wind;
And soon the casement rattled, the curtain moved,
The candle dimly lit, flamboyant flared.
The moment next they heard its soughing voice
Plaining in sycamore and olive tree,
Then swept out over field and hill and plain,
Leaving behind a gently whispering breeze,
That ebbing lower yet, went softly out,
Till nothing of the rushing sound was left,
Which just before the evening air had cleft.

Again with patience Jesus makes attempt
The teacher of the Jews the more instruct;

"Do not marvel at what I say to thee.
The wind from the four quarters of the earth
Doth blow whithersoever it may list,
Thou hear'st its sound rushing far over field,
Or over mountain, over plain, or sea,
But thou canst neither tell from whence it comes,
Nor yet hast knowledge of the way it goes;
So is ev'ry one that is spirit born.
That which is born of flesh remains but flesh,
And flesh can ne'er attain the spirit's goal.
Likewise that which is spirit born remains
In essence spiritual, despite the flesh—
Man's mortal vesture which he wears for time—
But he that hath the Spirit hath the Life.
Thou art the teacher and shouldst know this truth.
If you accept the earthly truth I tell,
Why not by faith accept the heavenly truth?
Thy faith need not be recklessly purblind,
Half witted and presumptuous here to claim
To know what God nor reason doth demand;
Indeed such is not the faith here required.
But let thy reason so approach the truth—
The spiritual truth as well as earthly facts—
(And such there is, let him deny who may)
Acknowledge simplicity where thou must,
Believing, where thou canst not understand,
(The Son whom God hath now revealed to men).
For God so loved the world His Son He gave,
That whosoever on Him would believe,
Should never die, but have eternal Life.
When Israel journeyed in the wilderness,
Afflicted for transgressions of the Law,
And poisonous serpents bit the people there,
Then Moses did a serpent make of brass,

And lifted it uphigh for all to see,
And whosoever looked on it was saved:
Ev'n so must be uplifted Son of Man,
That whosoever fully trusteth Him,
Believing and not doubting shall not die,
But living he shall have eternal Life."

He ceased to speak, and Nicodemus rose
To go, perplexed as much as when he came.
While yet he lingered Jesus spoke again:
"Wilt thou believe? 'Tis faith that opes the door.
Now enter in and know the truth and live.
No man hath yet ascended up to heav'n,
But the one that descended out of heav'n,
Even the Son of man who is in heav'n.
I verily declare to thee this truth:
Except indeed one is of water born,
And also he be of the Spirit born,
He cannot enter in the Realm of God!"
Then as the Pharisee went out the door,
He murmured over: "How can these things be!"
And out into the darkness made his way,
No wiser than before, but sadder still,
Remained a doubter and in mind perplexed,
And though that night he failed to choose Christ's way,
Did prove himself His friend another day.

XIV

Since first the wooing voice of love was heard,
And Hymen's altar decked with beauty stood
In Eden's flowery grove unhurt by sin,
And man to woman happily was wed,

God hath approved and blessed the holy bands
Of marriage plighted free in mutual love.
So have the children of those first wed thus
Repeated through the years the ancient rite,
And made a holiday for virgin love.

It was at fair Cana of Galilee
A bridal party came to celebrate
The bonds proclaimed between a youth and maid,
And merry make at the festivities.
And many were the kinsmen and the friends
Who came, together with invited guests,
And Jesus and His mother also came.
When all the rites were fittingly performed,
The dowery declared and tokens given,
And gratulations glad and full bestowed,
The friends and guests repaired to banquet room
To feast and drink and hymeneal sing.
The feast prepared was rich and variant;
The board was laden with all good things to eat:
The steamy dishes held the savory meat
Of venison, lamb, and all fowls edible,
And fish from sea on platters scalloped round,
With vessels high up-piled with leaven bread,
And dainty dishes holding spices sweet;
Of fruits, grapes, raisins, figs, and pomgranates,
And with all other things, the flowing wine.
Then while they dined and drank in merriment,
A whispered rumor of some ill portent
The steward reached, and made him leave the room.
The cause was found to be the wine had failed,
For soon the last vessel would be emptied,
While guests and friends were still unsatisfied.
It being too late to borrow or to buy,

The steward and the servants were perplexed
To find some way out of their sore distress.
But while they talked, the mother of Jesus
Their worry came to know, and what their need.
She knowing as none else who Jesus was,
And with His power being conversant,
Bethought that Jesus could relieve the need.
So forthwith she approached and to Him said:
"While yet the feast is on they have no wine,
Wilt Thou relieve the need and wine supply?"
Then He with formal words did make reply:
"O woman, what have I to do with thee?
The time for my appearing has not come."
But Mary reading deep His searching thoughts,
Now understood the high import they brought,
And turning to the servants simply said:
"Whatever He commands you do, do it."

The servants willing stood around to hear
What His command, and ready to obey.
And Jesus seeing six water-pots of stone,
Commanded that with water each be filled.
And when they had so filled them brimming full,
But wondering what it meant, He said to them:
"Now draw, and bear to ruler of the feast,
And let them drink that naught may mar the feast."
But when the ruler tasted of the wine,
He marveled much from whence such flavor came,
And calling to the bridegroom, to him saith:
"The custom is to give the best wine first,
And when the guests are fully satisfied,
They then bring on and offer that is worse,
But thou hast kept the best wine for the last!"
Such wine no grapes of earth have yielded since,

Nor Bacchus known the recipe to make;
No fiery poison foamed on chalice brim,
No demon spirit lurked in red-lipped cup,
Nor death his dance did hold for those who drank
Of vintage brewed in love and mystery.

XV

THEN Jesus journeyed back to Galilee,
And through Samaria now He needs must go,
And as He went one day to Sychar came,
Here was a place whereat there was a well.
This place had long been known as "Joseph's land,"
Bequeathed by Jacob to his younger son
Before he had to Ishmaelites been sold
And carried down in Egypt as a slave.
(But down in Egypt Joseph did wax great
In wisdom, understanding signs and dreams;
Becoming prince, he sat next to the king.
He sowed and gathered into stores much corn,
And fed the people when the famine came.)
It was at Jacob's well that caravans
Would stop to drink and rest and tell their rede.
Here at this well came Jesus and His friends,
Seeking refreshment from its cooling draught.
But He more weary being than the twelve
Remained to rest, and sat upon the curb,
While they in village did repair for food,
Leaving Him there in reminiscent mood.
The while He sat recalling history
Concerning Jacob and his mighty sons,
Thought too of prophecy long made Judah:
"The scepter from Judah shall not depart,
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet

Till Shiloh come, and He the people rule."
Accepting that He was Himself Shiloh,
The Son of David sprung from Judah's tribe,
There welled the sacred song deep in His soul:
"I have the Lord always before me set,
He is my strength, I soon shall not be moved,
My heart is glad, with glory I exult,
In perfect hope my flesh shall also dwell,
For Thou wilt not my soul in Sheol leave;
Thou wilt make known to me the way of life;
And in Thy presence is abounding joy,
At Thy right hand are pleasures evermore."

While thus He meditated, and Himself
Bethought the mighty work He came to do,
And how that work complete in love and grace
Would bring salvation to the lowly race,
Behold there came a woman of Samaria;
And she drew near to draw water from the well.
She scorned to look upon the lonely man
Who sat so silent thus upon the curb,
But with her lovely face askance approached.
At first she drew her veil more closely down,
Then lowered her water pitcher down in well,
And drew it quickly up, now brimming full
Of cooling limpid water to the curb.
She turned to go with feelings all averse
For Him who sat in silence watching her.
But ere she went He spake and said to her:
"Give me to drink, for weary I do thirst."

Though courtezan she was, a crimson blush
Suffused her face, but not of maiden shame,
But anger hot, that He should ask of her,

(For Jews do not deal with Samaritans)
And did His kindly words construe insult.
Then pertly tossing high her head she said:
"Thou art a Jew! and like all other Jews
Would's offer to your betters base insult!
The women of Samaria do not hold
With strangers, nor with Jews, such intercourse,
And dare you ask me, a Samaritan,
To share with you, a Jew, my water-pot!
If thou dost thirst, draw water for thyself!"
With this she lifted up her water-pot,
And sneering looked at Him, and turned to go.
But Jesus would detain her still, and said:
"If only thou knewest the gift of God,
And who it is that asketh drink of thee,
Thou wouldst indeed have asked of him a drink,
And he would give the living water thee."
Arrested by His mien, and words He spake,
The woman parleyed further, and replied:
"The well is deep, and thou hast not a rope,
From whence art thou able to give me drink?"
He now having her full consent answered:
"Day after day you hither come to draw
This water, and you drink and thirst again,
So hath it been with all who drink of this;
But water I shall give—if one shall drink—
Then he so satisfied shall thirst no more,
For water I shall give, will be in him
A never failing, and eternal fount."
She eagerly caught now His words, and said:
"O Sir, do give this water me to drink
That I no more shall thirst, nor come to draw!"
Then Jesus knowing all her heart, replied:
"Go call thy husband, and both hither come."

She said to Him: "I have no husband, Sir!"
"Thou hast no husband! truly said," He sighed,
And added: "Thou hast already had five!
And he whom thou hast now is not thine own."
"Now I perceive," she said, "Thou art a seer:
Our fathers worshipped in this mountain here,
But say ye Jews that in Jerusalem
Is place where all men ought to worship God:
I pray, if thou know'st, tell me which is right?"

Thus quick from truth the sinner would escape
Into confusion thralling with a rush,
By raising questions of such casuistry,
And deem of more importance mooted things
Than life and death, or saving of the soul.
But who like Christ the heart can understand,
See through its quibblings and evasive doubts,
And make of these the path to lead to truth?
So Jesus answered all she asked—and more;
Declaring neither right, but both were wrong;
And then the higher truth revealed to her,
That neither "here," and neither "there" of place,
Is chiefest in man's worship owed to God.
'Tis not the letter that most pleases God,
But Spirit; for Himself is Spirit pure,
And seeketh such to be His worshippers.
The time has come when forms must to substance
Give place, symbols obscure must yield to truth,
No man need say, "lo! Christ is 'here,' or 'there,' "
For Christ for God to man is everywhere.
A change came over the Samaritan:
She lowered her water-pot, and offered drink
To the Wayfarer sitting on the well.
A strange new feeling surged through her breast,

And a deep sense of need came o'er her soul
As plaintively she answered what He said:
"I know Messiah cometh, who is Christ;
When He is come, all things to us will tell."
Then Christ disclosed to her the wondrous Truth,
Which all the searching Prophets sought to know,
And Angels most desired to look into.
He said: "I that speaks unto thee, am He!"

As when the rosy morn drives back the dark,
Disclosing Nature in her beauty dressed,
Revealing fields, and plains, and hills, and woods,
Awaking flowers that lift their fragrant heads,
And sets the quiring birds to sing on wing,
And makes the world aglow with light and love;
So Heaven's Truth, the Day-spring from on high,
When it breaks o'er the soul, drives out the dark,
And there the Image of its Maker shows,
So long obscured by unbelief and sin,
And reconciliation emanant,
With Love divine, a holy sacrament.
And like unto some ice-fed mountain lake,
Whose wide extended arms receive the floods
Of muddy water sent by glaciers down,
Wherein the all embracing sun doth bathe
Each crystal drop with warmth and healing light,
Until the whole is cleansed and purified;
Thus rendered wholesome, sends it forth again
In rivers of blessing through all the land.
So Christ the sinner doth receive sin-soiled,
Surcharged with elements of moral death,
And by His love and all sufficient grace
Doth wash him clean from all unrighteousness,

And sends him forth in sacred ministries
To bear the world the torch of Light and Love.

She now discumbered of her waterpot,
Her soul all jubilant with praise of Him,
In haste speeds to the city with all might,
And as she went declared to all the men
She met upon the street that she had found
A man who told her all she ever did!
And then with joyful voice and rapture asked:
"Come see this man: Is not He Christ the Lord?"
The news in Sychar soon did spread abroad,
And thronging multitudes come out to see
This strange new Prophet, and to hear Him teach.
And just as to the woman, so to them
He taught the Way of Life, and made them glad
With knowledge of His Messianic word.
And when many Samaritans believed,
They sought Him to abide, and dwell with them.
But only two days more did He abide
Before He hastened on to Galilee.

XVI

He came to Cana first in Galilee,
Where He had changed the water into wine.
A certain Nobleman, whose son was sick,
And who resided at Capernaum,
Hearing that Jesus had come from Judæa,
Came and besought Him that He would come down
And heal his son, now at the point of death.
But Jesus wrought His gracious works by faith;
And so He would the Nobleman inspire
To have that faith this healing did require.

"Except ye signs and wonders see," said He,
"Ye stubbornly will in no wise believe."
The Nobleman obeisance makes, and says:
"O Sir, make haste, come down, ere my child die!"
When Jesus saw his faith was strong, He said:
"Go on thy way, have faith, thy son shall live."
And as the Nobleman did homeward go,
And sooner than he reached Capernaum,
A servant running met him in the way,
Declaring joyfully that his son lived.
Then did the Nobleman with joy believe,
And all his house, that Jesus was the Christ.

XVII

And next He came to Nazareth, His home,
Where He had been brought up, and all knew Him.
Kinsfolk and neighbors gathered, far and near,
Rehearsing all the wondrous things He did
Down at Jerusalem, and in Judæa,
For to see Him, and hear Him speak His word.
Upon the streets, and in the homes, they talked,
Some talk was favorable, and some was not.
Some said He was only a carpenter,
Others that He was a carpenter's son!
They pointed to the house where He grew up;
There was the shop where daily He had wrought,
And nothing great could from such place be brought!
But others still remembered well the lad:
How dutiful to parents when a child,
His rollicsome deportment when on street,
And sunny smile for all He came to meet.
And then when put to school surpassed His class;
He mastered the curriculum with ease,

And astonished all with His precocity,
Yet lacked of juvenile delinquency,
And having naught of puerile piquancy;
No hint of smudge upon His youthful days,
He won the favor of His neighbor's round.
Then they recalled when He to manhood came:
How faithful His apprenticeship He served,
And took His place in Joseph's shop to work:
The keen-edged tool most skilfully He used,
And lifting hammer drove the nail aright,
And pushed the saw by square and rule,
Till joint and mortise grew articulate,
And that no task was slighted by His hands,
Who strove to do an honest piece of work.
And now once more He was in Nazareth!
And when the Sabbath came, as was His wont,
He went to worship in the synagogue.
Here oft in former days when but a youth,
He did stand up and holy Scriptures read,
Commenting on the Law and Prophecy.
And many then did gladly record bear
To His great understanding of the Word;
And many times the rabbis and the scribes
Did testify He would a prophet be.
A multitude of people came that day
To synagogue; for far abroad had gone
The word that Jesus, Mary's Son, had come,
The mighty Wonder-worker, and would teach.

The throng was great, and all expectant sat
Their fellow-citizen to see and hear.
When all was quiet He stood up to read,
And they delivered unto Him the Book,
And searching found Isaiah's Roll, He read:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is on me,
He hath anointed me to preach Good News,
He sends me to proclaim release to captives,
And to the blind recovery of sight,
To set at liberty those who are bruised,
To tell th' acceptable year of the Lord."
He having finished reading, closed the Book,
And gave it back to the attendant near,
And then resumed His seat to speak His word.
All eyes in synagogue were fixed on Him,
And wonder filled their minds what He would say.
Then He began to say to them these words:
"Today your ears have heard this Roll fulfilled!
I am that Messenger now sent by God
To bear good tidings and to set you free,
I will your blindness heal and give you sight;
Deliver you from sin's oppressive chains,
And freedom give to all who have been bruised;
The year acceptable is now at hand,
And God by me is pleased to save the land."

Then some bore witness to the words of grace
Proceeding from His mouth, but wondered much
That Joseph's son should dare to speak such words.
But others scowled, and sought some fault to find,
And sneering laughed to scorn what He had said.
When Jesus saw their skepticism through,
And knew that unbelieving they found fault,
He bravely turned on them and sharply said:
"Ye will to me this proverb doubtless say:
'Now let the wise physician heal himself!'
And: 'what thou hast done at Capernaum,
Do thou also here in thine own country.'
But further yet I truly say to you:

No prophet is acceptable at home;
Others may honor and believe in him,
But his own people, disbelieving him,
Seek to dishonor him, and thrust him out.
But hear: The prophet others will receive,
And truly they his message will believe.
Do ye not now remember the great drought,
When for the space three years no rain did fall,
And fields did fail, and cattle and people died,
And great the suffering wide for man and beast?
Yet on account of sin and unbelief
Elijah to no Hebrew widow went,
But far away to Zarephath was sent
To a Zidonian widow in that land,
That he to her might lend a helping hand;
And she believing shared with him her bread,
While God each day increased her oil and meal;
And many lepers were in Israel
In the time of Elisha the prophet,
But none was healed because of unbelief,
Except the Syrian captain, Naaman.
This man believed the prophet, and was cleansed."
His speech now ended, Jesus rose to go.
But all in synagogue were filled with wrath,
Because they knew His words were meant for them;
And rising up they strove to cast Him forth.
Him seizing, they did drag upon the hill,
To brow, whereon their city had been built,
And would have cast Him down headlong to death,
But passing through their midst, He made His way,
And fleeing came down to Capernaum,
And dwelling there, this town became His home.

XVIII

Upon the rocky shore of Galilee,
Where lapping waves through countless years,
Have worn quiescent bays with whiten strand,
The weary fishermen drag up their boats
To count their catch, and dry and mend their nets.
Here too foregather all the villagers
In family groups, commingling on the beach;
The monger comes to heckle and to buy
At best advantage to resell in mart;
And some from distant towns and foreign lands,
Attracted by the crowd, halt caravans,
And mingle with the multitude on shore;
Perhaps some bargain drive, some shekels glean,
Among the common folk who gather there.
The buxom maid, suntanned, with laughing eyes,
Peeps from her veil to watch her brawny swain
So proudly heave on shore his cumbrous boat,
And by his raucus challenge wins her smile.
Old men come down to see the lads return,
And vent their plaudits for the good work done.
Here came the halt, the maimed, the deaf, the blind,
The sick, the poor, and folk of every kind—
A motley crowd—to see and beg for alms.
And oft too the proud Roman soldier came,
With rattling saber, wearing plumy crest,
To awe the people, and keep the peace,
And see that none of Cæsar's laws were broke.

The Syrian sun looked down from heaven high,
And glowed fervently o'er Gennessaret;
The frisky winds cooled not the parching heat,
All but intolerable to the gathered throng;

The rippling waves came eddying shoreward,
And lifting gently, rocked the anchored boats.
Some mien, some glance of eye, some spoken word
Revealed the Master standing in their midst,
When all about they pushed for vantage ground
That better they might see and hear Him speak.
And when they pressed Him to the water's edge,
And asked to hear Him speak the Word of God,
To one whose boat was lying near He said:
"Simon, thrust out a little from the land."
Forthwith the fisherman did thrust Him out;
And then the Master seated on the prow,
Looking beheld the wistful, waiting throng,
And spoke heaven's tidings of love to them.
Though none hath told of what He here discoursed,
We know by tenor of His wonted speech
What gracious words fell always from His lips.
And when He ceased to speak He looked around,
And saw the empty boat and fishermen;
Then o'er the rippling sea He sighed and said:
"Where is the catch for which ye toiled all night?"
For naught of fish saw He that they had caught;
"Put out into the deep, and let down your net,
And you shall gather in a multitude."
But Peter looking in His kindly face,
With sighing doubt and half of faith replied:
"Master, all night we've toiled and taken naught,
And now the time is passed for fisher's luck,
The fish have gone to feed on yonder shore,
And doth not now these sunlit waters' swim;
But at Thy words I will the net let down."
When lo, such numbers they had never seen
Enthralled by net in Galilee's bright lake;
So many that began their net to break.

They called their partner's who were on the shore
To hasten and come and lend a helping hand.
Forthwith these launched their boat and quickly came
Their aid to lend and bring the boat to land.
Then when both boats were overladen full,
And seemed all but to sink for load they bore,
The stalwart fisherman o'ercome with awe,
Fell down at Jesus' feet and cried aloud:
"O Lord, depart from me a sinful man!"
And so were all who were with him amazed
When they saw the great draught of fishes caught.
The Master soon assuaged their trembling fear
By gentle words in full assurance spoke,
And drew the lesson He designed to teach:
"Simon, fear not, henceforth thou shalt catch men,
And by such catching save them from their sin."

XIX

It was the Sabbath in Capernaum,
And Jesus went into the synagogue,
And as His custom was the people taught.
His manners, and His words, unlike the priests',
Or scribes, or anything they ever heard,
Did with amazement all the people fill;
They were astonished at His authority,
And wondered whence He was, and whence His power?
Nor borrowed He of any man his words,
Nor followed their example as He taught,
But of Himself taught law and prophecy.
And while the people listening all amazed,
A man having an unclean demon cried:
"Ah! Jesus, what have we to do with Thee?
Thou art the Just One come from Nazareth.

I know Thee, who Thou art, God's Holy One.
Art Thou with power come us to destroy?"

As nothing comes from nothing, but the cause,
First, adequate the impulse to exist,
Must be extant; then follows the effect,
Which is great Nature's universal Law,
Primordial since things and time have been;
Whatever is of things, or thought, or else,
Material or spiritual, in earth or sky,
Came by law of cause and effect to be;
All good from some good adequate has come,
And evil likewise must from evil come;
All righteousness must have a righteous cause,
And evil comes from some unholy source;
These being opposites, originate
From opposite causes, and work apart
With purposes and spirit quite opposed.
When God Incarnate came on earth to serve
Mankind with love, and teach him holiness,
And walked among the sons of men, as Man,
Revealing God, and blessing sinful men,
Came then evil also, and dwelt in men,
But not incarnate, but spirits diffused,
Did enter men to vex them night and day—,
The One to save, the other to destroy.
Since Jesus Satan met in wilderness,
And vanquished him quite in that crucial test,
The Evil One had not opposed himself
The Master's way till now, but skulking sought
Both time and place propitious for his work
To hinder most the Master's ministry.
He deeming time and place both now at hand,
Possessed the man, and caused him thus to cry,

Intending revelation, Who He was,
To force the issue of His Saviourhood,
For which the people were not yet prepared,
And disbelieving they would cast Him out,
As those had done before at Nazareth;
Or, if acknowledged at this time, would mar
The plan divine, which He Himself had set
To teach and train disciples for His work
Before His sacrifice on Calvary.
But Jesus knowing the Satanic purpose well,
And that the man the evil spirit held,
Knew not why he cried thus, or what he meant,
Disdained to parley, or note what was said,
But the unclean spirit rebuked, and said:
"Hold thou thy peace!" And: "Come forth out of him!"
The demon awed by Jesus's mighty words,
And wroth because of his own impotence,
And that he must obey the Word divine,
Did hurl headlong the man down in their midst,
Though tearing with convulsion wild, hurt not,
And bellowing loud he came forth out the man.
And when the people saw the man was healed,
They all were so amazed at what was done,
And insomuch that they did question much
Among themselves, saying: "What can this mean?
A new doctrine! And with authority
The demons He commands, and they obey!"
And this report of Him went out straightway
In all the region round of Galilee.

XX

While yet the people in amazement talked
Of what was said and done in synagogue,

Jesus withdrew, and came to Peter's house,
(For Peter's home was in Capernaum).
And Peter's wife's mother was very sick,
She being holden of a great fever,
And tossed upon her bed in greatest pain,
While they besought Him that He would heal her.
His ministry was not unto Himself,
And He came not that others should serve Him,
But that He might be Servant unto all.
In life He did not seek for fame from men,
Nor covet reputation for Himself;
And being on equality with God,
He did not think this something to be grasped,
But laid it all aside that He might serve;
And being found in fashion as a man,
Himself did humble like a slave to serve.
With man's infirmities He was so touched,
That when their cry for help arose to Him,
It was His joy to hear and answer them.
So into chamber now He gently goes,
And seeing Peter's wife's mother lay sick,
He took her by the hand and raised her up—,
The fever left—, and she was well again!
This healing also soon was spread abroad,
So when the evening came a multitude
Did gather at the house, bringing their sick,
And all afflicted with any disease,
And paralytic, and devil possessed.
The devils He cast out, the palsied healed,
And sent them all away healed every whit.
At last when all were gone and quiet came,
The weary household and disciples slept,
But no sweet sleep kissed down His weary eyes.
Long ere the morn in russet mantle clad,

Tipped back the gates of dawn, and Phœbus drove
His shining car mid-heaven's archèd way;
While yet the shades of night immantled earth,
The mighty Worker slipped from Peter's house,
And hurrying forth sought out a desert place,
Where none of eyes could see, nor ears could hear,
Nor meddling presence Him could interpose,
And there communing with His Father God,
He sought in prayer for strength to do His work.
When night had passed, and new had come the day,
The family rose up, and Peter missed his Guest!
Alarmed, he soon his comrades did arouse,
And called to each to join him in the quest,
That they their absent Master find again.
They searched throughout the house, in every room,
And then of neighbors diligently inquired,
Nor ceased till they the city wide had searched,
If they perchance might find where He had gone.
But none had seen, or heard since night before,
The Wonder Man, nor knew His hiding-place.
Soon all the city gathered bout the house,
And much the talk and speculation had
Concerning why He had so disappeared:
Perhaps, beside Himself, had wandered forth,
And had been torn by some ferocious beast,
Or yet perchance, some enemy had come,
And borne Him hence, His mission to estop.
Then Peter and all those who followed him
Passed out the town to search the country round.
And late in day, when they had walked afar,
They came upon a desert place remote,
And lo! they found Him there engaged in prayer.
And Peter petulant somewhat then said:
"Good Master, why hast Thou so treated us?

We found Thy sleeping couch this morn untouched,
And when nowhere in house we could Thee find,
We searched the town, and spread the news around;
And here we find Thee in this desert place!
Come, all the people now do seek for Thee;
Thou art so worn; refreshment Thou must have
For strength to heal, and all the people teach."
Then Jesus unreproving, mildly said:
"Let us go now elsewhere to the next towns,
That I may preach the gospel there to them;
For to them also therefore was I sent."
And so they journeyed in all Galilee,
Preaching and teaching in their synagogues,
And whithersoever they went He healed
All manner of disease and sicknesses.
Now this report of Him went far in Syria,
And unto Him they brought all that were sick—
Those holden of all manner of disease—
Possessed of devils, or were epileptic,
Those held in torments and were paralytic,
And He with power did gladly heal them all.
Great were the multitudes that followed Him—
From Galilee, Decapolis, Judæa,
Jerusalem, and from beyond Jordan!

XXI

The work of healing now did grow apace,
And little time did Jesus find to teach;
Nor yet did even have the time to pray,
But gave Himself to all who came for help.
He oft from town and throng to desert went,
Withdrawing there some rest to find, and teach
Disciples, and prepare them for the Work.

One day when He was in a certain town,
There came to Him a man with leprosy,
And kneeling down prayed that he might be clean.
Moved with compassion Jesus stretched His hand,
And touched the leprous man, and he was healed.
Then straightway sent him out, and strictly charged
That he tell none that Jesus made him clean;
But go his way, and show himself to priest,
And make the offering required by law,
Thus certifying that he had been cleansed.
Forgetting all too soon what had been charged,
He published much that Jesus had him healed.
So great commotion followed this report,
That He no more could enter in the towns,
But in the desert made His dwelling place.

Then after certain days He once again
Returned, and came back in Capernaum.
As soon as this was known a multitude
Did gather bout the house where He was found,
To hear Him preach, and bringing all their sick,
That He might heal them of their maladies.
Reports of this, and all His mighty works
In Galilee, spread to Jerusalem,
And Scribes and Pharisees were much concerned
What it could mean, or whereto it would grow;
They sent their emissaries down to watch;
Be present when He wrought His healing acts,
And learn first hand what He the people taught.
So on this day, down at Capernaum,
These spies were there, watching to see and hear
What He would say and scan His healing work.
So great the crowd no longer was there room
For any one to enter in the house.

And while He was speaking to them the Word,
Four men came bringing one of palsy sick;
And when they could not come within the door,
They gently bore him to the roof above,
And there removing tile they let him down
Where Jesus stood, there in the very midst.
The Master when He saw their faith was great,
Exclaimed: "Thy sins are all forgiven thee!"
The spies in silence reasoned in their hearts:
"This man blasphemeth by what he doth say!"
And straightway Jesus knowing all they thought,
Turning, addressed them in these solemn words:
"Why reason ye these things within your hearts?
Which is the easier to say to this sick man:
'Thy sins are now forgiven thee,' or say:
'Arise, stand up, and take thy bed and walk'?
But now that ye may know the Son of man
Does have the power on earth sin to forgive,
(He saith to the man sick of the palsy)
"Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way!"
The man arose straightway, took up his bed,
And walked before them all in perfect health.
As when a lull precedes the fiercest storm,
Whose very stillness doth produce great awe,
And gives respite to the emotion pent,
That when the thunder rolls and lightning strikes,
And solid earth from its foundations moves,
The mind reacts the fitter to endure
These wild disturbances in elements,
And shares in part the spirit of the storm:
So, breathless all the while sat watching throng,
While Jesus did accuse the spying scribes,
And openly charged them with evil thoughts:
But when He spake the words, and healed the man,

They vented wild and joyous their applause,
Praising and glorifying God, and said:
"We never did see such a thing before!"
While yet the multitude were filled with joy,
And in their hearts acclaimed Jesus the Christ,
The spies rode post-haste for Jerusalem
To make report of what they saw and heard.
Till now the Council at Jerusalem
Were undisturbed by Jesus and His work,
But now alarmed they watch with care His course,
And ever afterward wher'er He goes
Their spies will know all that He says and does.

XXII

And on a day when He the people taught,
The ruler, Jairus, of the synagogue,
Whose only daughter, now twelve years of age,
Lay sick at home, nigh even unto death,
Came worshiping, and saying unto Him:
"My daughter lieth low, perhaps now dead!
But Master come, and lay Thy hand on her,
And she shall yet survive, and shall not die."
The pains of others did so pierce His heart,
And being touched with man's infirmities,
His ears were ever open to hear the cry
Of those afflicted and enduring pain.
And then however deep engrossed He was,
He neither cold nor heat, by day or night,
Nor hunger, thirst, nor weariness of flesh,
Allowed to hinder Him from lending help.
Forthwith He leaves teaching to minister
To troubled ruler and his little girl.

And as He went a multitude so great
Did throng about He scarce could make His way.

Among this surging crowd a woman came,
Who had an issue of blood for twelve years,
And no physician had the issue staunched;
And though all her living was spent for cure,
She nothing better grew, but only worse.
She oft had heard the marvelous cures performed
By this man Jesus come from Nazareth,
And longed to have Him heal her malady.
But who was she, with none to love or care—,
No friend or kinsman great to ask of Him
For her this priceless boon of health and life?
Yet closer up she pressed till close she stood,
And saw the radiant love upon His face,
His countenance suffused with gentleness,
And all His bearing so full of tenderness,
Her faith became courageous bold with hope,
Until her trembling hand outstretched did touch
Behind His flowing robe, and she was healed!
Then stopping suddenly as with surprise,
He asked: "Who was it touched my garment then?"
For Jesus knew from Him had virtue gone.
When all had then denied, bold Peter said:
"Why do you ask who he is that touched Thee?
Thou see'st the multitude great all about,
Of them any one might have touched Thee now."
Then Jesus looked around in loving search
Of her who had this thing done unto Him.
The woman knowing what had been done for her,
Looking up met His kindly eyes with fear,
And trembling came, and falling at His feet
She said: "Be not angry with me, my Lord!
Long have I suffered, holden with disease;
My nights have been so long! and great my pain;
Nor days from suffering me respite brought,

But day and night my body racked with pain
Till now the winter's frost the leaves has cast
Twelve times since I knew life in health and joy.
I heard that Thou didst heal the sick for love,
And didst compassion have on all the poor,
Since naught I have—nor gold nor silver mine
To longer compensate physician's art,
(For my possessions all have long been spent)
Nor yet had loving friend, or kinsman great
My poor plight to implead with Thee for help;
But still I felt, if only I might touch
Thy garment's border, Thou wouldst not withhold
From me, Thy handmaiden, Thy precious gift.
I only came so near! Thy garment touched,
And nothing more, and this is all the truth;
When lo! the rush of health did thrill me through,
And sent along the avenues of life
A pulsing new, and all my pain was gone!
If now I wrong have done by coming thus,
Forgive, O Lord, but still accept my praise,
And may Thy name be great through all the days!"
She ceased, and Jesus kindly made reply:
"Arise, my daughter, be thou of good cheer,
Thy faith which is so great hath made thee whole,
Go now in peace, thy plague shall not return."
The woman went away in perfect health,
And Jesus went with ruler to his house.

Behold they made a tumult, weeping much,
And wailing greatly said the child was dead!
But when He sought to make them understand
The child would not remain in death, but live,
They ceased to weep, to only laugh with scorn
At what He said about the "sleeping child."

Then caused He them all to be put without,
Excepting parents only of the child,
And also with them Peter, James and John;
With these He entered in and made His way
To couch whereon was laid the little girl.
So far, till now Jesus had not met death;
Of sin, whereof it came, its recompense,
In divers and all manner of disease,
In paralytic, maimed, halt, blind and deaf,
The palsied, and men by devils possessed,
And all the forms of base iniquity
He saw, and in His work encountered oft,
But death, supremest penalty for sin,
Until this day He had not seen its face.
If here He shall now conquer, all is well,
His faith grown strong, will doubly stronger grow,
And men no longer fear of tomb need have;
For by His might He will have vanquished death.
But if He fail! O, perish the thought,—He fail!
But if He fail, sin will have won its wage,
And man remain its victim through the age.
The weeping parents kneel on hither side,
Soft sobbing; the disciples stand in awe,
Wild wondering what thing will next take place.
The Master calms them all, Himself serene.
Then reaching forth He took the damsel's hand,
And spake the living words that gave her life:
"Talitha cumi!" which interpreted
Means: "Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise!"
She stirred a moment, then opened her eyes;
Her spirit had returned, she was alive!

And Jesus journeyed round in Galilee,
Preaching and teaching in the synagogues,

And healing every manner of disease:
The sick He made well with a spoken word,
The lame at His command stood up and walked,
The tongue long dumb He loosed to sing His praise,
The palsied man receiving strength arose,
The withered hand He caused to be restored,
The scales fell off from blinded eyes to see,
The ears of those long deaf He oped to hear,
The evil spirits from men He did cast forth,
The dead He raised up unto life again,
And unto all the poor did preach Good News.
His teachings and commands He gave to men,
Revealing heavenly things and spiritual truths;
And many signs and wonders wrought to prove
Whose Son He was, and Saviour of the world.
He oft sent His Disciples out to preach
And heal, and do the works that He had done,
Preparing them to serve when He was gone.
Then oft He would them overtake, and watch
Them work, and hear them preach to all Glad News.
At other times He waited their return,
And heard them tell the mighty deeds they wrought,
By having faith, and trusting in His name,
Recounting all the praise of multitudes,
And how the people everywhere believed
Him David's Son, the promised One to come.
Meanwhile, the Scribes and Pharisees found fault,
And sought to hinder Him in all His work.
They said His deeds were by Beelzebub,
And Jesus was an evil minister,
Declaring Him the basest of base men,
Unworthy of men's praise and confidence.
They cavilled at His birth; He was untaught
In the great School down at Jerusalem;

He lacked of sacerdotal lineage;
He desecrated holy Sabbath days,
And would not unto Elders render praise;
Despised the Prophets, Moses and the Law;
Regarded not the Temple and its rites;
Foreswore traditions handed down from Scribes;
The sacred Ordinances failed to keep,
And blasphemously claimed to be God's Son!
Mauger His works they could not well deny,
But still the holy Worker would decry.

XXIII

The days grew into weeks, and weeks to months,
Until two years, perhaps as much as three,
Had been completed, teaching and preaching
Throughout the land, wherein He visited
In every part—in Galilee, Judæa,
Samaria, Peræa, Decapolis—
And made disciples by His mighty works.
Of these great numbers came and followed Him,
Believing Him to be Messiah King.
But all the while the Scribes and Pharisees,
The Priests and Chief Priests in Jerusalem,
The Sanhedrin, and all the Sadducees,
Were much concerned by all they heard of Him,
Of what He taught, and all His wonders wrought,
And how the people everywhere proclaimed
Him Lord, believing Him Messiah come.
Then Sanhedrin, together with Elders,
And all the ruling Council, greatly feared
Whereunto such insurgency would grow,
And plotted how they might put Him away.
For they thought it were better He should die,

Than living He should bring about revolt,
And Romans come and take their place away.

XXIV

AGAIN came season of Passover feast,
And multitudes came to Jerusalem;
As was His custom, Jesus also went.
While there He visited Bethesda Pool,
And saw great numbers in the porches lay
Of those sick people, withered, halt and blind,
Among all these there was a certain man,
Who had been sick for thirty and eight years;
Nor wealth, nor friends, nor loved ones yet, had he
To comfort and to cheer him in his plight;
And day and night he lay, but still had hope
That men would have compassion on his need,
And merciful would put him in the pool.
For it was said, and long had been believed,
That waters of this pool at certain times
Would heal sick men of whatsoever ill,
If they could be the first to enter in,
When once the angel had the waters stirred.
When Jesus saw this man, and knew how long
He thus had lain, and waited hopefully
That he might yet some day be first in pool,
He had compassion great to heal his pain,
And spoke most kindly to him of his need:
"Wouldest thou be made whole?" The man replied:
(Nor kent He was who had so kindly spoke)
"I have no man, Sir, when the waters stir,
To lend me helping hand to reach the pool,
And whilst alone I strive to enter in,
Others whose plight is not so bad as mine,

Outdistance me, and step in just before."
And Jesus stood and looked long at the man,
Beheld his poor emaciated form:
The sunken eyes that peeped so lusterless,
His hair unkempt, and features all awry,
With limbs so wasted and twisted in form,
And garments scarce enough to cover him—
A living wreck of what man ought to be!
But deeper far than mortal ken He saw
The poor race weltering in all the filth
That scumming sin through countless years had brought,
And the unpitying havoc it had wrought.
Bethinking too the man's long cherished hope
That some day he perhaps would be made whole,
His soul in pity moving deep for him,
He said: "Arise, take up thy bed and walk!"
Like as the warming sun of springtime brings
New life to sleeping nature, waking up
The dormant powers in seed, in trees and grass,
Reclothing field and hill with verdant life,
So the life-giving words of Jesus woke
Within this human wreck a sense of life;
From crown to toe-tip down he felt the thrill
Of life pulsing anew through all his frame,
And courage to obey Jesus moved him
Forthwith to leap upon his feet and stand,
Then gathering up his bed he walked away;
And this was on a holy Sabbath day!
Such act could not escape the vigilance
Of watching Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees.
Now soon they spied the man bearing his bed,
And him accosted for breaking the law!
The man straightway did offer for defense
That He who healed him, bade him take his bed.

When questioned further still who him had healed,
Could not say, for he wist not who He was,
For Jesus had conveyed Himself away,
Avoiding in that place the multitude.
The healed man happy into temple went,
And worshiping rejoiced in his new health.
There Jesus suddenly found him and said:
"Behold, thou art made whole like other men,
Beware! and sin no more, lest a worse thing
Befall thee, and there be no healing found!"
Not thinking, nor intending to harm Him,
The healed man went away and told the Jews
That it was Jesus who had made him whole.
And for this cause the Jews did persecute
Jesus, because He healed on Sabbath days.
The charge Jesus did not deny, but said:
"My Father ceaseth not to work till now,
But every day He plies His shaping hand,
Creating and rebuilding here on earth,
Holding within His palms the flying worlds,
He makes the sun, and moon, and stars to shine;
My Father gives the breath of life to man,
Sustains that life, and heals man of his plagues;
And as the Father works, so works the Son,
And to the Son revealeth all He does.
And all His power, and all authority
The Father hath committed to the Son;
So he that doth not honor give the Son,
Doth not the Father honor Who sent Him.
But he that hears my words, believing God
Who sent me the same hath eternal life.
And he shall never into judgment come,
But hath passed out of death and into life.
I verily say unto you, the hour

Will come, yea is now, when the dead shall hear
The voice of Son of God, and hearing live;
For as the Father in Himself hath life,
Ordains the Son shall have life in Himself.
Why marvel ye at this? The hour cometh
When all the dead shall hear my voice,
And shall come forth: those doing good, to Life;
But unto judgment, all who have done ill."
Then did the anger of the Jews wax hot
Against Him for His speech as well as deed,
Until they were about to take His life,
Consulting how they might take and kill Him,
For they said He did break the Sabbath day,
And blasphemously claimed His father God!
But sooner than they could lay hands on Him,
Jesus escaped from out Jerusalem,
And made His journey back to Galilee.

XXV

When back in Galilee, Jesus resumed
His journeys round about and preached the Word,
Sometimes in towns, oftimes down by the sea,
Proclaiming the "Good News" where'er He went,
Teaching the people and healing the sick.
He spake in parables and stories told,
The better Kingdom truths to men unfold.
So great the multitudes that followed Him,
And so exhausting was the works He wrought,
That oft some quiet place for rest He sought.
It was on one such day at eventide,
Upon the shores of placid Galilee,
When Jesus was all worn, and so fatigued,
That He commanded them that they depart

By boat, and pass from thence to other side.
As soon as they had supped they entered boat;
And lifting anchor they set sail. The prow
Was soon parting the gently lapping waves.
The closing water phosphorescent ran,
Leaving the wake a coruscating track.
The Master, chief Worker among them all,
Most wearied with the long day's toil, retired
To hinder part of boat and laid His head
On cushion there, and soon was sound asleep.
The stout arms of disciples plied the oars,
And drave the boat most proudly o'er the sea.
The night was calm, no cloud in heaven appeared,
The sphering moon flung down her gentle beams,
The radiant stars vied with the queen of night,
Bestrewing sea with heaven's softest light.

Far off, on some high hill, the Evil One,
Who now pursued with malice Jesus' steps
Where'er He went, and sought to hinder Him
His great work for redemption of the race,
Looked down and saw the little boat afloat,
Quiescent riding o'er the placid lake,
With Jesus fast asleep in hinder part;
And with His wonted spite against the Son
Of God, bethought the time most opportune
To 'whelm with dire disaster in the deep
Both Master and disciples while He slept,
And so cut short the reign of heaven on earth,
And all the Hope of man confound in death.
Forthwith he summons all the evil powers
In earth, in air, and high above the air,
Perverting all the natural elements,
To join and aid him in the hellish deed.

Where for so short a while ago the lake
Did sheen with softest light of moon and stars,
Became now brooded o'er with densest dark;
The vaulted sky which just before appeared
So calm and peaceful auguring no storm,
Now blackened grew as midnight, pitchy black,
Till naught could men see out upon the deep;
The heated air ascends swift upwardly,
Leaving a vacuous atmosphere below;
The cooling winds on all sides now rush down,
And soon the peaceful lake is torn by storm.
The heavens above are filled with racing clouds,
The lightning like a fiery dagger stabs
Into the ebon vitals, thence the thunder
Released, which, roaring through the vaulted skies,
Shakes earth, and jars the pillared universe.
The lake now lashed into great fury raves,
Its gentle ripples turned to maddening waves.
The tiny boat which gliding just before
With swan-like grace upon the peaceful lake
Was caught and hurled about by racing wind;
One moment sunk between two raging crests,
Entombed by foaming walls seemed all but lost;
The next disgorged by these in impact met
Was hurled high up to only meet the next
Onrush of water furious in its rage.
The rudder in the air no aid could be,
And when in sea was whirled around so fast
No hand could steer the course of tossing boat.
The deck awashed, the sail torn off and gone,
No oars could hold the helm of boat aport
In storm like this, though manned by stoutest arms.
In many a storm these bravest fishermen
Had been before, and fought their way to land,

But never till this night such fury saw
On waters of the peaceful Galilee.
Long did they bear themselves, brave men and true,
And strove with all their might the storm ride through.
But came at last despair! All hope was gone!
Already sea was pouring over wales;
The boat all overladen with the flood
Did wallow in the troughs of raging waves,
And creaking loud, trembling from prow to stern,
Seemed ready now to take the fatal plunge.
Through all this raging storm the Master slept,
Nor once He saw or heard the danger near.
But His disciples now gave up all hope
Of reaching land through such a howling blast,
Believing boat and all would soon go down,
And none could out the raging waves escape,
Cried out and woke Him with their prayers for help:
"O Master! Master! O awake! Save us!
O Master! Carest Thou not that we perish!
See'st Thou the angry waves? Hear'st Thou the winds?
We never saw on Galilee such storm!
O Master, save us, or we perish all!
Our utmost we have done, but we are lost.
Save us! Save us! Save us! O Master, save!"
The Master wakes to see the maddening sea
Just as the dashing waves the cushion splash,
Whereon at eve He lay for rest and sleep;
Himself is whelmed and drenched by foaming spray,
And hears the deafening roar of angry winds.
But of disciples first He thinks and cares;
Ere storm of wind and waves attention give,
He would their fear assuage, their faith revive:
"Why are ye fearful? Have ye yet no faith?
The winds are but My Father's ministers;

The mighty sea is His, and all the deep;
He balances the clouds, and sends them forth;
The lightnings are obedient to His will;
He doth create and He upholds all things.
The Evil One hath done this wicked thing;
Toward all my Father loves, malevolent,
Perverts the elements benevolent,
And what God hath designed for benefit
Converts that he destruction may inflict."
Having somewhat assuaged their trembling fear,
He now attention gives the wind and sea:
"Ye howling winds avaunt! Straightway go hence
Back to your mountain home and there abide,
And blow no more upon this troublous sea!
And all ye waves, be still! Let there be peace!"
As when that Voice resounding through Chaos,
Commanding darkness yield to coming light,
And all the elements and substances
Distributed throughout the universe,
Each gathered to its kind harmoniously,
Disintegrating some to reingrate
Again, until component parts by law
Had found their rhythmic place, and habit fixed,
From dancing atom up to sphering worlds,
Both animate and the inanimate,
So now He speaks, and His authority
Commands submissive full obedience.
Straightway the winds do scurry all away
Till scarce a zephyr broods o'er all the sea,
And all the waves sink down in perfect peace.
Then were disciples filled with fear and dread
At what was done, but most at Him who spake,
And as they marveled, to each other said:

"What manner of man is this that commands
The winds and sea, and even they obey!"

XXVI

Not far remote from shores of Galilee
Is Khersa, village of the Gadarenes.
The people here were poor and far removed
From noisy trade and centers cultural.
Here Jesus looked to find a place for rest;
But rest and peace for Him there seemed was none
From rising up of sun till day was done;
He heard the plaintive cry on every hand
Of all the suffering people in the land.
At Khersa lived a demoniacal man,
Exceeding fierce; unbound and naked roved
The country round, and dwelt within the tombs.
At night his cries were heard on mountain side:
Sometimes shrieking as racked with torture's pain,
At others laughed as with a demon's glee;
And oft he bellowed like an animal,
Roaring defiant challenge to a foe;
Again would scream with cry of fiercest beast,
In deadly combat with some prey to kill;
One night would sing and laugh as happiest man,
Till all the mountain rang with gleeful song;
The next would cry as if among the damned.
When day was come he skulked the village round
Gorging garbage and filth wherever found;
And with his ravenous appetite supplied
He back to his sepulchral dwelling hied.
So fierce and wild the demon in the man,
None durst his way impede, or him molest,
But all avoid him as a dangerous pest.

So soon as Jesus came from boat on shore,
The demoniacal man Him did espy,
And running came and bowed and worshipped Him.
When Jesus saw the man in his sore plight,
And knew how Satan had afflicted him,
And sorely him had bound through all the years,
He had compassion on the man and said:
"Come forth, thou unclean spirit out of him!"
The demon in the man compelled him say:
"O Jesus! What have I to do with Thee?
For Thou art the Son of the Most High God;
I Thee adjure by God, torment me not!"
Then Jesus further questioned him and asked:
"Of all the evil spirits, which art thou?"
Then did the spirit boastful make reply:
"My name is legion, for we are many."
Straightway Jesus most stern commanded him:
"Come forth, Legion, and be cast into sea!"
Then did the evil spirit learn again
His wiles could naught prevail against the Son,
But ever must Him yield, and Him obey;
Yet knowing too how great His mercy is,
Did pleadingly beseech Jesus the Lord
That He would not send him into the deep.
Now there was feeding near on mountain side
A herd of many swine, and undisturbed
Their keepers watched and kept from going astray.
The devils beg, and Jesus much entreat
That He would not them send into the deep,
But grant that they might enter in the swine.
For purpose known to Him who is all-wise,
And in the providence of God is right,
Though here by mortals still misunderstood,
Did Jesus grant the devils their request.

Then out of man they came and entered swine.
No sooner had the devils entered them
Than terrified by such inhabitants,
They squeal and rush about in every way,
Till suddenly sheer down the steep they ran
Into the sea and all the herd was drowned!
Beholding all that had befallen them,
The keepers fled and in the city told
Of all they saw and heard, with loss of swine.
Then all the city came out to see Jesus;
And when they saw Him, and learned all the truth
About the man from whom the devils went,
And saw this man in his right mind, and clothed,
But missed the herd of swine drowned in the sea,
They fearful grew, and beg that Jesus go,
And longer tarry not in all their coast.
The Master grieved to think how selfish men,
Or why this fear because He wrought the deed
Of casting devils from demented man.
While man hath fallen low, beguiled by sin,
The victim of disease destroying life,
With passions wild, himself his deadliest foe,
Despising beauty, oft rejecting good,
Sinking oft down in pit of shame and death—
Yet wears he still the lineage of the King,
Whose likeness makes man worth far more than all
In heaven, or in earth, or under earth:
From low lute note to loud crashing cymbal,
From breath of dewy dawn to mid-day splendor,
From rainbow's idling hues to surging sea,
From lilting zephyrs to howling hurricane,
From undulating plain to mountain range,
From murmuring brook to storm-swept ocean,
From earth-born shadow to star-lit glory,

From insect incentiveless to tall Arch Angel—
God's Man in grandeur far surpasses all.
What though a herd of swine were lost in sea,
A man was truly saved from misery!
But since forsooth these would not Him receive,
And prayed that He no longer tarry there,
Jesus prepares to go, and enters boat,
And taking His disciples came away.
But he that had by devils been possessed
Besought Jesus that he might go with Him,
But Jesus him denied, and said to him:
"Go to thy home, and to thy friends, and tell
How great the things the Lord hath done for thee,
And how on thee He hath compassion had."
This man, now sane, returning to his home
Began to publish in Decapolis
The healing he received from Christ the Lord.

XXVII

As times went on those who had learned of Him
To preach the gospel, and its power use,
Them He sent forth to teach and heal the sick.
And when they had evangelized around,
Wrought many deeds of wonder in His name—
Returned, and told to Him all they had done,
And all the things they had the people taught.
Seeing how weary and how worn they were
From all the arduous task they underwent,
He called them come apart and rest awhile.
For this they crossed the sea of Galilee,
And sought a desert place to be alone.
But when the multitude saw them depart,
They ran ahead on foot around the Lake,

And sooner than they, reached the other side.
So when He and disciples came ashore,
The multitude were there and greeted them.
Then Jesus welcomed them, and spake to them
Glad tidings of God's Kingdom and His love,
And those that needed healing them He healed.
So round Him gathered once again the folk
To hear Him preach, and see the mighty deeds
He wrought in healing all their sicknesses.

And when the day began to wear away,
Then anxious the disciples to Him said:
"Soon, Master, yonder sun will sink from sight,
And then will fall the shadows of the night:
Behold the people weary have no food,
And some already have begun to faint;
Bid them disperse, and to their homes repair,
That they may victuals find and rest procure.
With deep compassion Jesus viewed the throng,
Their faces wan and wistful eyes beheld,
Knew their sad hearts, and leanness of their souls,
And heard the inarticulate prayer made
By men and women long disconsolate
Because of sin's dire work and cruel hate,
He deep was moved to give them some relief.
Then calling His disciples said to them:
"The weary people have no need depart,
Make ready ye, and give them meat to eat.
Whence, Philip, shall we buy the bread for them?"
Said this to Philip that He might prove him,
For He Himself knew just what He would do.
Then careful Philip quickly taled the bill,
And much surprised the calculation gave:
"Two hundred pennyworth would scarcely be

Sufficient that each might have just a crumb!"
Then modest Andrew, Peter's brother, said:
"I find a lad here who hath brought along
Five barley loaves, no more, and fishes two,
But what are they among this multitude!"
Then Jesus said: "Bring hither what you have,
And bid the people on the grass sit down."
When He the loaves and fishes had received,
Looking up into heaven them He blessed,
And then began the barley loaves to break,
Likewise the two fishes He parceled out.
Then He divided to disciples both,
And they in turn divided to the throng,
When lo! the loaves and fishes multiplied,
Till all the multitude were satisfied.
That naught be wasted He commanded them
To gather up the broken pieces left.
When they so gathered, each disciple brought
A basket full of broken pieces left
Of barley loaves and fishes—twelve in all.
And they that did eat were of men above
Five thousands, the women and children besides.
Then all the people, when they saw this sign,
Did testify that Jesus was indeed:
"The Prophet that cometh into the world."

And while He sent the multitudes away,
The Twelve He did constrain to re-embark,
And go before unto the other side.
And when the multitudes would not disperse,
But rather strove by force to make Him king,
Withdrawing, up into the mountain went,
And there He tarried long in prayer at night.
While thus engaged a furious storm broke loose

O'er all the sea, and drave in deep distress
The boat and His disciples in the waves,
And winds contrary tossed them to and fro.
All night disciples bravely fought the storm,
And strove to hold their course to other side,
But rowing hard the storm could not outride.
As when the eagle wings afield for prey,
And upward soars high on some mountain perch,
The better still to scan horizon round,
Looks out and sees approaching angry storm;
Then fearing for the nestlings, swiftly flies
In face of gale, nor recks the howling blast,
That he may interpose himself to shield
The eaglets from the fierce and beating storm.
So Jesus from yon mountain high looks down,
And seeing His disciples sore distressed
Amid the waves and winds on Galilee,
He downward swiftly takes the stony path,
His mighty power for them to interpose,
To calm the winds, and rescue them from waves.
Yet came He not like eagle-child of storm—,
Who strong of wing, and fearless in his will,
Yet oft when buffeted and driven by wind,
Prolonging flight too far, may weary grow,
And losing course may downward fainting fall.
Not so with Him who is the Lord of storms:
He knows the secret chamber whence the wind,
And He commands the zephyr and the gale;
He with the lightning talks as friend with friend,
And speaks, and threatening thunders Him obey.
When now at last He reached the stormy coast,
It being late in morning watch—yet dark—,
The fisher folk, and those who manned the oars,
Being still abed, had not begun to stir;

And finding none of boats to take Him out,
He calmly steps upon the restless waves,
Whose drops congealing 'neath His firming tread,
Become a path as solid as the earth;
And whether foaming trough, or spraying crest,
They rose or fell so soon as them He prest.
Thus fared He forth far o'er the stormy deep,
Straight where disciples fought, 'gainst wind and waves.
While they outworn and weary, with hope all gone,
Peering through mist and dark, did catch His form
In silence, passing by; and thinking Him
A ghost, the harbinger of some dread fate,
Cried out with great alarm, and prayed for help;
For none of men was ever known to walk
Abroad o'er stormy deep as they see Him.
Then through the roaring wind they hear that Voice:
"Be of good cheer, fear not, for it is I!"
Despite assurance, doubt prolonged their fear,
And trembling, wist not answer they should give
To Him who walked out there in wind and waves.
But boldest Peter gathers strength and says:
"If Thou be not a ghost, but Christ the Lord,
Command me now that I shall come to Thee;
And as upon the waters Thou dost walk,
So even shall I tread their threatening waves."
Then answered back the Master o'er the sea:
"That ye may know that it is I who speak,
Fear not, believe, and forthwith come to me!"
Convinced now it was Jesus' voice he heard,
The daring Peter throws aside all fear,
And leaping strake, sets foot upon the sea.
The others look in horror at the deed,
Expecting soon to see him sink beneath
The angry waves, and swallowed up, be lost!

When lo! they see him walking over sea.
As first the toddling child begins to walk
Is thrilled with courage each new step he takes,
Till in full confidence his way he makes:
So Peter, much elated, proudly strode
From trough to crest, and down again between
The ridgy waves to mount another crest;
Nor heeded roaring deep, nor storming winds,
But onward straight to Jesus held his course.
Again like child, too conscious of success,
Begins to think of dangers all beset,
Then losing confidence is filled with fear,
And halting, hesitates, and down he falls:
So Peter, too aware of his success,
And fully conscious now of blowing wind,
Sooner than he the waiting Saviour reached,
Begins to greatly fear, and down he sinks!
But ere the waves him overwhelmed complete,
He cried aloud with fear: "O Lord, save me!"
At once the Master did stretch forth His hand,
And taking hold of him upbore, and said:
"O thou of little faith! why did'st thou doubt?"
And holding him safe, bore him back to boat.
And when they had gone up on board from sea,
The winds all ceased, the sea became all calm.
Then did disciples worship Him, and said:
" 'Tis true, O Lord, THOU ART THE SON OF GOD!"

XXVIII

AND many things He said more times than once,
Repeating o'er and o'er the message old,
Until in every part and region round
The people heard and knew the doctrine told.

He healed disease of many divers kind,
And in ways different wrought mighty deeds
Of mercy to relieve the needy poor.
He companied with all classes of men;
To-day He went into the homes of wealth,
And oft consorted with the richest men;
To-morrow sat with peasants at their board,
And graciously shared in their meager meal.
The publicans and sinners drew near Him,
And found a welcome like as did the saints.
And where He did not journey, went His fame
In all parts of Judæa, and Galilee;
And many truly did believe Him Christ,
Accepting Him as Saviour sent from God,
Though understood not import of His work.
In Galilee they wished to make Him King,
And keen to raise the standard of revolt,
Would from the Romans wrest the government.
His own apostles too, were led astray,
Believing He would have an earthly throne,
And they as princes would the kingdom share.
Down in Judæa they were afraid of Him,
And jealous of His popularity.
But Scribes and Pharisees were anxious much
To find excuse to have Him put to death.

XXIX

And now the time had come when Jesus must
Disclose Himself, and the divine intent
Of His incarnate life with men on earth—
God to reveal in love to all mankind—
And yield Himself to death that men might know
How great that Love that lives and never dies.

And thus it came about one Sabbath day
That many had come into the synagogue,
Who, by the miracle in desert wrought,
Had feasted on five loaves and fishes two,
And followed Him back to Capernaum.
And when they asked Him for a sign of Christ,
It was on this wise He did speak to them:
"Ye seek not to increase by sign your faith,
But just because ye ate in desert place
The loaves and fishes that I gave to you;
'Tis they ye seek, and not me as your Lord;
And ye would that I feed you always thus!"
They say to Him: "And why not feed us thus?
When Moses led the people he fed them:
'He gave them bread from heaven,' so it is writ;
If Thou art Christ indeed, then give us bread."
Then Jesus answer made, and unto them said:
"Not Moses, but my Father gave that bread;
Your fathers ate the manna and are dead,
But the true Bread my Father shall give you—
The Bread that giveth Life unto the world;
He that eateth thereof shall never die.
Make not your aim the meat that perisheth,
But strive for Bread that gives eternal Life,
This is the Bread my Father giveth you."
Then while He looked around on multitude
They said: "Lord, evermore give us this Bread!"
Then Jesus said to them: "I am that Bread
Which down from heaven came, which if ye eat,
Will never hunger more, nor will ye thirst;
And ye must eat my flesh and drink my blood,
Or else you have not everlasting life;
But he that eats and drinks will have that Life,
And I will raise him up in that last day."

The Jews then murmured greatly, and did strive
Among themselves, saying: "How can this man
Give us his flesh to eat, and blood to drink?
Moreover, we know who His parents are:
We know He is the woman Mary's son,
His father is Joseph the carpenter.
How then saith he that from heaven he came down!"
And they were by His speech offended much;
And many of His own disciples said:
"This is a hard saying; who can hear Him?"
And Jesus knowing that they murmured, said:
"These words I speak are spirit, and are Life,
But some of you will not in me believe;
For this I said, 'No man can come to me,
Except the Father draw him unto me.'"
For this not a few, who once walked with Him,
Went back and followed with Him never more.
When all had gone except the Twelve alone,
He turned with sorrowing heart and said to them:
"Do ye wish also now to go away?"
Then Simon Peter spake for all, and said:
"Lord, now to whom shall Thy disciples go?
For we believe Thou art Messiah come,
And Thou alone hast words of Life Eternal!"

XXX

He finding in the land of Galilee,
No place where He might have repose and rest,
And further His disciples teach the truth,
Jesus withdraws apart to foreign strand,
And journeys northward to Phœnician land.
Here in the region of Sidon and Tyre,
He sought some friendly house or place,

Where all unknown, He would be left to rest;
But whither went He, went before His fame.
The people came from far and near to see
And hear the Prophet come from Galilee.
Among the rest a Syrophœnician—
A mother in distress, because her child,
Still young in years, by devils was possessed;
And falling at His feet, she cried for help.
At first Jesus did not incline to hear
Her prayer, nor deigned to answer her request;
"Let first the children have their meat and eat;
It is not meet to cast their bread to dogs!"
This only He designed her faith to test,
For none did ever with more grace bestow
Than Jesus did on all who came and sought.
And when her faith mounted to meet her need,
He yielded like a God, and gave her heed:
"True, Lord, I know how far unworthy we
To have Thy favor least bestowed on me;
But little dogs beneath the table eat
The crumbs, when children have sufficient meat.
I pray that we, though little dogs may be,
Yet may some crumbs of mercy fall on me."
While thus the woman importuned the Lord,
Accepting all He said, but urging still
Her prayer, both for herself and for her child,
Disciples coming said: Send her away!
But Jesus listening heard her sobbing cry,
And His great Soul was moved with deep concern
For her sore need, and gently answered her:
"Great is thy faith, woman! Thou hast prevailed,
Thy prayer is answered, and thy daughter healed."

XXXI

Now once again Jesus withdrew apart
From arduous labors and the multitudes,
Where in retreat He might Himself prepare
For Exodus down at Jerusalem;
And also make Himself more fully known
To His disciples, and the coming death,
The better that faith might be fortified
To bear the shock when He is crucified.
So leaving now the thronging multitudes,
He came into the coast of Cæsarea,
Which is beyond Jordan in Philippi.
And here He did commune with them, and asked:
"Ye faithful followed with me through the years,
Ye have the wonders seen which I performed—
How I have healed the sick, and fed the poor,
The blind I made to see, the deaf to hear,
The withered hand restored, the palsied healed,
Cast out unclean demons that dwelt in men,
Abated fevers, and the dead raised up.
And preached 'Good News' to all the people round;
Ye too have seen the throngs that followed me,
Heard oft their glad acclaim and praise of me;
One day their faith would fill my soul with joy,
The next their unbelief would sorrow bring;
And oft I weened they did me understand,
As oft I knew their eyes were holden fast,
And that my message brought to them no light:
What think ye from what ye have seen and heard
Among the people where we have journeyed forth—
Who do the multitudes say that I am?"
And when they said: "Some say, John the Baptist,
Some say, Elijah, and some say Jeremy,

But others say, Thou art a prophet come,"
He wistful quickly looked at them and said:
"But what think ye? Who say ye that I am?"
The twelve Apostles once did Him believe,
And did Him as Messiah once receive,
But when He oft declined the offered crown,
Refused support of all who wished Him King,
And gave Himself alone to teach and preach
Among the poor and weak in Galilee,
And would not openly Himself proclaim,
They were perplexed at Him and wondered still:
If He were Christ, why not the claim fulfil?
For yet they little knew the Master's plan,
That soon He would to them His glory show,
And had through years of wise tuition taught
Their minds and hearts that they might be prepared
This glorious apparition to behold.
But Simon Peter now Him answered bold:
"Thou art the Christ, the Son of living God!"
In that hour was the Master's heart made glad,
And cheered He was more than ever before,
That His disciples still believed in Him,
And time had come when He could show them more
The meaning of His life on earth to save.
Then Jesus to Simon Peter replied:
"Thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, art truly blessed!
For man has not revealed this unto thee,
My Father in heaven hath showed it thee;
Moreover, I in truth say unto thee:
Thou art PETROS, but not upon this rock,
Nor on thy faith, however strong it be,
Nor yet upon thy good confession made,
But on this PETRA will I build my church:
THAT GOD MY FATHER CAN MAKE KNOWN TO MEN

That I am Christ, the Son of living God!
Upon this Rock alone I build my church.
The gates of hades never can prevail
Against this church, nor shall death overthrow
The church I build upon the shores of time.
But unto thee I give the Kingdom's keys,
Which is the gospel thou shalt preach to men;
And whosoever enters by that door
In faith, shall find release from all his sins,
And like a precious stone be built in church,
Of which I am myself chief corner stone;
But he who will not enter thus by faith,
Remains without, and unreleased from sin.
And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth,
The same in heaven also shall be bound;
And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth,
The same in heaven also shall be loosed."
Then charged He His disciples that they tell
No man, as yet, that He was Christ the Lord.
And from that time Jesus began to show
To His disciples how that He must go
Up to Jerusalem, and suffer there
So many things of Elders and Chief Priests;
Be killed, but on third day be raised again.
Again were His disciples scandalized
To hear Him tell of suffering all these things;
And Peter took Him, and rebuking said:
"Let such a thing be far from Thee, my Lord!
For these things never shall come unto Thee."
The Master turning round, to Peter said:
"Get thee behind me, Simon, thou art Satan!
A stumbling block! Thou art offence to me!
Thou savorest not the things that be of God,
But mindest only things that be of men.

If any man shall wish to follow me,
He truly must repent, and self deny,
And taking up his cross, then follow me;
For whosoever would his life now save,
The same shall find that he has lost his life;
And whosoever shall his life now lose,
And lose it for my sake, shall save his life;
For wherein would a man be profited,
If he the whole world gain and lose his life?
Or what shall man give in exchange for life?"

XXXII

Still farther north in land of Palestine,
Mount Hermon lonely stands with snowy peak,
Its triple crest uprising, cloudy bathed,
Defies time's ravage, and remains unscathed—
The crown and glory of the hills around.
Long had the sun gone down, and closed the day,
But still the twilight lingered on its brow,
Clothing with stately awe the country round,—
For lonely grandeur no place like this is found.
Here six days after, Jesus came to pray,
And with Him bringeth Peter, James and John,
These followed Him, not knowing the import high
Of why they journeyed in this lonely place,
Nor read the purpose in His placid face.
But upward still they picked their silent way
O'er stony pathway that before them lay.
The air grew cool, the biting wind whipped round
O'er all the mountain side, and moaned protest
That these should break upon its solitude:
Save this, no other sound the stillness broke.
High up they rested, and from fagots scant

Of scraggy scrubs they gathered lit a fire
Behind a boulder vast, and wished for warmth.
Here Jesus late in night discoursed to them,
Revealing things He ne'er had told before.

Pause Muse! however wild thy fancy be,
And thou Imagination! all aflame,
Have care, and do thou heed precaution here,
Lest thou attempt what hath not been revealed.
Seek thou to tell what only hath been told,
Sufficient if thou sing the things of old.
But as He talked, they weary with the climb,
And 'scaped from biting wind, were so relaxed
Him ceased to hear, and soon were sound asleep!
And while they slept, Himself withdrew apart
Still higher up the mountain side to pray.
Perhaps at other times, to men untold,
When He withdrew apart to be alone,
And held celestial tryst, did Jesus have
Rapport with heaven and heavenly beings,
And visitants of holy men sent down,
And angels coming, held converse with Him,
While audible tokens of God Himself,
Were granted then unto Beloved Son.
So here tonight, while thus the Master prayed,
The glory of His being broke forth and shone
With splendor, such as men had never known:
His raiment whiter grew than fuller's white,
Dispersing far the shadows of the night,
And all His countenance effulgent glowed,
Like the unclouded sun at midday hour.
Then at the gates of sleep the glowing light
Did gently knock, and sleepers did awake;
And they the Master saw transfigured stand!

When lo! with Him appeared two other men:
The one was Moses, and Elias the other;
And they were talking of His coming death,
Which shall take place soon at Jerusalem.
So dazzled by the bright epiphany,
And so amazed by what they saw and heard,
The three disciples speechless upward peered
At Jesus and the heavenly visitants.
Then Peter gaining voice cried out and said:
"It is good, Master, to be in this place,
Let us now make three tabernacles here—
One first of all, and full complete, for Thee,
Then one for Moses, another for Elias."
And this he spake, not knowing what he said,
For he was quite beside himself with fear.
And then another Voice speaking they heard
From out a hovering cloud that covered them:
"This is my Son, in whom I am well pleased,
My own beloved Son, do ye hear Him!"
And when they heard the Voice they fell as dead,
Knowing naught till Jesus came and touched them,
And said: "Arise, and be ye not afraid."
And when again they fully were aroused,
Looking around they saw none save Jesus.
Gone all the shining cloud from mountain side,
And disappeared those two who talked with Him;
No Voice was heard the stillness breaking round.

Now far in east advancing day approached,
And drifting night ran westward through the hills.
But longer still they tarried in that place,
While Jesus talked with them, dispelling fear,
Assuring naught of danger now was near.
When day grew older, and they downward came,

The Master charged them, and with caution due,
That nothing of the vision tell to men,
Until His resurrection should ensue.
The secret well they kept till later years,
And when they came to read its meaning full,
They told its glory to the infant church.
No sooner had they down from mountain come,
Than He is met by thronging multitude,
Who ran to Him and did Him reverence.
Among them was a man who knelt and prayed
That Jesus would have mercy on his son.
The boy, an epileptic, suffered much,
And the disease so grievously used him
That life itself was oft in jeopardy,
Sometime by drowning, and sometime by fire.
And when Jesus told them to bring the boy,
No sooner did the lad behold Jesus,
Than the fit seized, and tore him grievously,
Then Jesus did rebuke the spirit foul,
And straightway drave him out, and healed the boy;
Then to his father gave him back, restored
In perfect health, though all had thought him dead;
And when the multitude saw him alive,
The majesty of God filled all with awe.

XXXIII

The Feast called Tabernacles by the Jews
Was now at hand, and many people went
From country round up to Jerusalem.
And Jesus' brethren urged that He attend,
That His disciples coming there might see
The mighty works He did, and be confirmed
In their belief that He Messiah was,

And there make more disciples as elsewhere.
For neither could His brethren understand
Why He did not at once declare Himself;
And they already had begun to doubt.
But their advice Jesus did not receive,
And plainly told them so, and to them said:
"My days are not yet numbered, nor hath come
The time to openly declare myself.
But ye have naught to wait—your time is here;
The world cannot hate you, but me it hates,
Because I speak against its evil works.
Go ye then up at once unto the feast,
But I will not as yet this feast attend."
But when His brethren had gone up to feast,
Then Jesus also went up, but unknown.
The Jews had been expecting Him to come,
And had their plans laid how they might take Him,
But when He came not they were frustrated.
The multitude were also in dispute,
And murmured many things concerning Him:
Some said, that a good man He truly was,
Some said, He led the people all astray.
Yet those believing in Him held their tongue,
No man declaring openly for Him,
Because the multitude did fear the Jews.
Then suddenly, in the midst of the feast,
Appeared in Temple, Jesus; and He taught
The people gathered there the Word of God.
The Jews and officers surrounded Him
To hear what message He the people brought,
And they were filled with wonder as He taught,
Saying: "Whence learned this man these mighty things?
He is a Galilæan, and is unschooled!"
And Jesus answered them: "What ye now hear

Is not my teaching, but His who sent me;
If ye desire to know, and will obey
Him who sent me, the doctrine ye shall know.
But why are ye intent on killing me?
Ye circumcise a man on Sabbath days,
Because ye say, that Moses gave the law,
And for this reason the law must be kept,
(And yet not Moses gave to you that law,
But by the Fathers first it was proclaimed)
Moreover, none of you doth keep the law,
And then pass over lightly your pretense!
Now when I heal a man on Sabbath day,
Making him whole again—entirely well,
Then for this healing you wish to kill me!
According to appearance do not judge;
But rather reach your judgment righteously."
This accusation greatly angered them,
And all the multitude did sneering say:
"Thou hast a devil! Who tried to kill thee?"
While some said: "How can this man be the Christ?
For we know certainly whence He hath come,
But whence the Christ cometh, no one doth know."
Still others said: "But when the Christ does come,
Will He be able greater works to do?"
And others of Jerusalem remarked:
"Is not this the man whom they sought to kill?
And were but yesterday looking for Him,
That they might Him arrest and put to death,
And said, He purposely remained away,
Declaring that He was afraid to come,
And lo, He speaketh openly to all,
While none can answer Him, nor durst molest;
Have all the rulers too believed in Him!"
Such accusation caused the Pharisees

Embarrassment, and they with priests withdrew,
And held a council to see what they would do.
And when they had rehearsed the matter through,
They sent their officers to bring Jesus;
But Jesus went on teaching the people.
Among the things He said to them were these:
"Yet for a little while, I am with you,
And then to Him who sent me will I go;
Then ye shall seek me, and shall not find me,
For where I am you by no means can come."
The last day of the feast was the great day;
Then thousands thronged about the Temple courts,
And watched the priests in glad procession bring,
In golden vessels, from Siloam's fount
The sacred water to commemorate
The smiting of the rock in wilderness
By Moses, whence the limpid water gushed
Forthwith, and all the famished people drank.
And while the priests poured from the golden urns
The laving water, and Hallel chanted,
Jesus stood viewing the ceremony;
And lifting up His voice He cried aloud:
"If any man thirst, let him come to me
And drink; if only he believe on me,
From out his innermost life,—yea, his soul,
As Scriptures say: 'The living stream shall flow.'"
Confusion spread among the multitude
Concerning all the words that Jesus spake,
And much division came among the throng;
One part contending Jesus was the Christ,
Another steadfastly denied the claim,
Saying: "Can Christ come out of Galilee?
Doth not the Scripture say: 'Of David's seed

Comes Christ? and from the village Bethlehem,'
The place where David the great King was born?"

And while they did debate, the officers
Withdrew, and hastened to the Pharisees,
And brought them word of all they saw and heard.
But when they did not bring Jesus with them,
The Pharisees were much provoked, and asked
Why they had not brought Him? The officers
Replied: "Never man spake like this man speaks!"
This answer disconcerted them the more,
And with rebuke they sneeringly replied:
"Ye simple minded! Are ye led astray?
Behold the rulers and the Pharisees,
These men of keen judgment and probity,
Of understanding, in the Law well versed,
They do not Him accept, nor Him believe.
This multitude which knoweth not the Law!
They are accursed—a motley, worthless crowd!"
Then Nicodemus, being one of them—
The same that came to Jesus once by night—
Did modestly suggest, and interposed:
"The Law doth not adjudge a man condemned,
Except it first hear him, and know his crime."
They snorted: "Bah! Art thou of Galilee?
Go search and see that what we say is true;
The holy Rolls nowhere have ever said
A Prophet out of Galilee shall come."
And while they thus in fierce contention strove,
They parted every man unto his house,
And Jesus to Mount Olive then withdrew.

XXXIV

While yet the morn was young Jesus returned,
And came again unto the Temple court,
Where soon a multitude did gather round,
And listened to Him teach the Word of God.
And while He taught, the Scribes and Pharisees
Came also back into the Temple court
To watch and see, if they might find some cause
For which to bring Him to the judgment seat.
And while He taught they bring a woman in,
One that had grievously transgressed the Law;
And having set her in the midst they say:
"This woman, Master, hath committed sin,
For which Moses commands that she be stoned!
Thou didst on yesterday declare of us:
That we keep not, nor do we honor Law.
Behold! we prove your accusation false,
For it is now our judgment that she die!
Dost Thou consent? What sayest Thou for her?
Wilt Thou uphold the Law as well as we?"
And there she stood with none to plead her cause;
The culprit equal with her in the crime
Unknown, unsought, absconded, uncondemned!
But she the helpless, broken, soiled, accused,
Stood trembling at the holy bar of Love.
The Master ceased to teach, and looked around
With pitying scorn upon His countenance;
For well He knew the purpose in their minds,
And why they came seeking to interrupt
His teaching, and the people drive away;
Or else make Him appear a criminal,
And so against Him stir their fickle minds.
But Jesus stooping down wrote on the ground,

Ignoring them, while silence reigned around.
Again they taunt Him with their pious claim:
"The law of Moses by us shall be kept,
This woman shall the penalty endure!
Dost Thou consent? What sayest Thou for her?"
Again He stoopeth down and slowly wrote,
His finger tracing out the sinner's plea:
"My Father willeth not such sacrifice;
The broken heart, a soul by evil crushed—
A heart all broken by true penitence,
Is all the sacrifice He doth require;
And such my Father never will despise."
Then looking up with solemn voice He said:
" 'Tis by such mercy all ye must escape,
For all are saved by God's abounding grace.
Let him among you having never sinned,
Be now the first to cast a stone at her."
They cowered at His words, and slunk away,
Beginning from the eldest to the least
Went out, one by one from the Temple court,
With only Jesus and the woman left.
Her sin was not condoned, nor yet excused,
For she was guilty of the crime, and stood
Condemned by law of man, and Law of God,
But His high mission was to save from sin
By showing mercy where the law condemned.
If He could heal all manner of sickness,
Deliver men whom devils did possess,
Call back the breath of life in those who died,
Could He this sin-soiled soul make whole again?
Unless He could perform this deed divine,
As Saviour of a sinful world He failed!
And benefit from Him to man is naught,
Save as a noble man He lived and taught.

Then Jesus lifted up Himself and said:
"Where are they, woman? Doth none thee condemn?"
No word till now had passed her silent lips;
She knew for her defense there was no room,
So trembling waited for the pending doom.
Perhaps at other times she may have heard
The gentle Teacher tell to sinful men
That He would give them balm for wounded hearts;
Perhaps had seen some miracle He had wrought,
Or heard some souls redeemed tell of their joy,
When He had given peace to troubled minds.
But now His kindly mien and sympathy
Begat within her penitential soul
The trembling hope that He would her forgive.
Before she speaks the tears rain down her cheeks,
Her hair disheveled hides her crimson face,
While through her sinful soul emotions race.
He not impatient waits to hear her speak.
At last as suppliant she answer made:
"Gone have they all, my Lord, no man condemns;
Wilt Thou on me have mercy, and forgive?
It hath been writ: 'Though all your sins should be
As scarlet red, they shall be white like snow,
And all the crimson ones shall be as wool;'
If for such sin there can some mercy be,
Lord, may I not some mercy find with Thee?"
She bowed her head, and waited Him to speak,
Nor waited long ere from His blessed lips
She heard those sweetest words of pardoning grace:
"I neither thee condemn! Go thou in peace;
Thy prayer is heard, and answered thy request.
Where sin abounds, grace also more abounds,
And whosoever calleth, shall be saved;
Believe in me, and henceforth sin no more!"

XXXV

He tarried longer at Jerusalem,
And there in Temple taught the Word of God
To multitudes that daily came and went.
The people heard Him gladly and with joy,
But Scribes and Pharisees rejected Him,
Distorting all He said, opposed His words,
And ever plotted how they might Him kill.
But Jesus knowing whence He came, and who
He was, and the great Task He came to do,
Continued, and serenely pressed His Work.
More glorious than the seven high gates of Thebes,
Wiser than all the sages of the past,
Stronger than Atlas bearing up the world,
Mightier than great Olympus Jupiter,
Is he who panoplies himself with right;
His creed is not to get, to hold, to have,
Of sordid gold, of acres broad, of fame;
To hear the plaudits of fawning thousands,
Who may today bestow the myrtle crown,
But on tomorrow cast their idol down;
But who each day, seen or unseen by men,
Chooses him steadfastly the right to do,
And walks upright before all men and God,—
This man is blessed, both now and evermore.

While now the sun had almost run his course,
And gathering shadows filled the Temple court,
And the soft tread of night came stealing on,
The candelabra in the Holy Place
Flung out their struggling beams upon the throng,
And cast a halo bout the Master's brow.
The people paused as from the court they went,

And ling'ring, looked upon that countenance,
Wherein was blended all the gentleness
Of loving sympathy with righteousness,
And pitying compassion for lost men,
With scorn repellent for their every sin.
Just as the gloaming deepened into dusk,
Save only candelabra's misty beams,
The Master spoke above the droning crowd,
Saying: "I am the Light of this dark world,
He that walketh with me shall walk in light,
And walking he shall have the Light of Life."
The Pharisees with scorn said unto Him:
"By this Thou bearest witness of Thyself,
Moreover, such a witness is not true!"
And Jesus answering replied to them:
"But if I bear this witness of myself,
Yet such a witness is true every whit.
Your law accepts the witness of two men;
My Father who sent me into the world,
He beareth witness that my words are true,
And I do testify my words are true,
Then why do ye not yet believe them true?"
And now with bitterness and scorn they say:
"Who is Thy Father? Bah! and where is He?
We know Thee, and Thy Father is well known
To us—the carpenter of Bethlehem!"
Despite the sneer of Scribes and Pharisees,
And all of their entangling colloquy,
Many believed on Him, and took His side,
Declaring their Discipleship with Him.
Then Jesus said to those believing Jews:
"Abide ye in my words, for they are truth,
And ye indeed shall my disciples be;
And knowing truth, the truth shall make you free."

But these believing Jews were now incensed,
And scornfully did query what He said;
"In truth! We are the seed of Abraham,
And never have in bondage been to man.
What meanest Thou then: 'Ye shall be made free?'"
How hard it is to lead the stubborn mind
Up from dark ignorance the truth to find;
No teacher ever with more patience sought
The open mind than Jesus when He taught;
And drove the shaft of truth, with all His might
To pierce and drive away the rayless night.
He oft would woo by telling homely tales,
Meant to excite the sluggish minds of men,
Perchance reveal the pith and point of truth;
At other times He smote with trenchant words
The citadel of wrong, and tore the mask
From off its hideous face that men might see
How wrong is Wrong, and all Wrong's misery!
Their prejudice the more caused them to hate
The Teacher, and left Him disconsolate,
But when they found they could not answer Him,
They angry grew, and Scribes and Pharisees
Stirred up the people that they should stone Him;
And when He saw they sought His life, He hid;
And while they searched and made commotion round,
Jesus went out, and nowhere could be found.

XXXVI

After this Jesus left Jerusalem,
And journeyed round in near by Provinces,
Making disciples as He taught and healed.
He also made many devoted friends,
Who shared His claims, and ministered unto Him.

Among these was a home in Bethany,
Where lived a saintly man named Lazarus,
With Martha and Mary his two sisters.
These oft received Jesus into their home,
And gladly gave Him hospitality.
Here Jesus found retreat, and rest from crowds
That ever thronged Him, whither He might walk;
And from the Jews who persecuted Him
He found escape within this haven home.
These three believed in Him and what He taught.
Accepting Him as Saviour—the Messiah,
And by their hospitality gave proof
Of faith, receiving Him beneath their roof.
And for such faith He loved them tenderly
Because they loved and served Him faithfully.
Then came a day when He was far away
Teaching the people, and healing the sick,
And had not seen these friends for many days.
Now Lazarus fell sick unto his death,
Which caused Mary and Martha great distress,
And hastily they sent to Jesus saying:
"Behold, he whom Thou lovest, Lord, is sick!"
When Jesus had received the word, He said:
"This sickness shall not be alone for death,
But it shall be for glory unto God,
And by it too I shall be glorified."
Then in that place He yet remained two days,
And to the sisters seemed to give no heed,
Nor was concerned for all their pleading need.
But after this to His disciples said:
"Let us go once again unto Judæa,
For our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep,
And I go to awake him out his sleep."
But the disciples feared for Him to go

Again unto Judæa; for there the Jews
Had sought to have Him stoned; so to Him said:
"If, Lord, he sleepeth now, he doeth well,
For sleep is the assurance of his health;
Besides, the Jews in Judah seek Thy life."
Then Jesus told them plainly, and explained
That what He meant was Lazarus had died,
And that He was going to raise him up.
But still, all the disciples greatly feared
For Him, if He returned to Bethany,
Believing that the Jews would seek His life.
When they could not dissuade Him from His course,
They said among themselves: "Let us go now
With Him, that we may also with Him die!"
Departing thence they came to Bethany;
But Lazarus had died some days before,
And had already been entombed four days.
Now Bethany was near Jerusalem,
And many Jews, friends of the family,
Had come to comfort Martha and Mary,
Consoling them concerning Lazarus.
The sisters hearing that Jesus had come,
Martha arose, and went out to meet Him,
But Mary still remained within the house,
Nor ceased to mourn, nor stirred she from her couch.
When Martha came where Jesus was, she said:
"Hadst Thou been here my brother had not died,
Yet I know what Thou askest, God will give."
The Master kindly spake to her and said:
"Weep not, thy brother shall rise up again."
"I know," she said, "that he shall rise again
At the last day, the resurrection morn,
But hadst Thou been here he would not have died!"
And lifting up her voice she wept aloud

With inconsolable anguish and grief.
Her lamentations stirred the Master's soul
To deepest pity and compassion great,
And He spake to her words of tenderness:
"Martha! Martha! I am the resurrection,
I also am the Life; he that believes
On me, though he were dead, yet shall he live,
And whosoever liveth, and believes
On me, this one, I say, shall never die;
Believest thou this?" She to Jesus saith:
"Yea, Lord, I have believed Thou art the Christ,
The Son of God that comes into the world."
Having said this she went back in the house;
And called her sister Mary secretly,
For the Jews who had come were watching her,
And whispering that none might hear, she said:
"The Lord is come, and calleth now for thee."
And Mary hearing, hurriedly went out
As though she would go hence to weep at tomb.
The Jews this thinking, rose and followed her.
When Mary came where Jesus was, she said:
"Hadst Thou been here my brother had not died!"
With this she gave herself to plaintive cries,
And all the Jews joined in with wailing sighs.
Now when Jesus saw how they wept and wailed,
His spirit was disquieted to think
They unbelieving vexed their souls with doubt,
The rather than believing what He said:
That Lazarus should rise out of the grave.
"Where have ye laid him?" Jesus now inquired.
They say: "Come Thou, Thyself, and see the place."
And leading on they brought Him to the grave.
And when He came near where they had laid him,
His soul so sensitive to pain gave way,

And though He doubted not, and had no fears,
Jesus Himself broke down, and burst in tears.
The Jews who came along, seeing Him weep,
Spoke out and said: "Behold, how He loved him!
Could not this man, who opened blinded eyes,
Have caused that this man also should not die!"
Now Jesus groaning cometh to the tomb,
The mouth of which was closed with a great stone.
When Jesus said: "Take ye the stone away,"
Then Martha was much perplexed, and said:
"Far be it, Lord! He hath been dead four days,
And by this time the odor will be bad,
For now the body must have much decayed!"
Then Jesus said to her: "Did I not say,
Believing thou shalt see the glory of God?"
They now remove the stone from off the tomb,
O Death! thou symbol of man's nakedness,
The dread and fear of all living on earth;
Thou dost with grinning glee pluck beauty's wreath
From off the brow of roseate youth's bright morn;
Thy ebon shadows fall with equal pall,
Upon the threshold of both age and youth.
Disrupter of man's sweetest ties on earth!
Thou smoth'rest from his heart all joy and mirth;
Thy poisonous drops hang on life's beaker's brim
Like morning dew on blushing roses' lips,
And rob the cup of life of peace and joy;
No strain of sweetest music can appease
Thy jangling notes, all gnashing with discord;
Thy mace strikes terror to the stoutest heart,
And from thy fatal blow none can escape!

Again stands Jesus face to face with death,
And must from death's thrall rescue Lazarus,

And by superior power give back life's breath,
Else how can man believe Him Lord of death?
Then lifted Jesus up His voice and said:
"I thank Thee, Father, that Thou heardest me,
And I know that Thou always hearest me;
But for the multitude here standing round,
And that they might believe Thou sendest me,
I said it: that Thy glory they may see!"
And having prayed thus, Jesus cried aloud:
"O Lazarus, come forth from out the grave!"
Not since first Death lifted its sable head
On this fair sphere, called earth, and yawning grave
Oped wide voracious doors for all that live,
Through which none passing ever have returned,
Hath man its silent power devised to break.
The current may unhindered run its course,
Obedient to fixed nature's changeless law,
Until another law, super-imposed,
Inaugurate surcease, and change the flow;
Then must it yield its course to super-law.
So God who hath ordained that man must die
Because of sin, ordains that man shall live
Again through Him appointed Lord of death,
Thus sin may reign in man unto his death,
But Life in Christ is unto righteousness,
And He shall break death's thrall o'er all the race,
For Jesus Christ is Lord of life and death.
So when the Lord His mandate spoke to death,
He that had lain in grave four days came forth,
Bound with grave-clothes, both as to hand and foot,
With a grave-napkin bound about his face.
And therefore of the Jews many who came
Beholding Lazarus rise, believed on Him,
But others went straightway to Pharisees

And told them all the things that Jesus did.
Confusion worst confounded filled their minds,
As Pharisees in council gathered grave,
For to consider this far-famed report
Of raising Lazarus up from the dead.
They much debated whereto it would grow:
"If let alone all men will follow Him,
And thus our holy faith will come to naught;
Besides, He will sedition cause to rise
Among the multitudes, and bring on war,
And then the Romans will our places take,
And in the end our nation take away!"
Then Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year,
Rose up, and solemnly said to them all:
"Ye nothing know at all, as ye should know!
Why sit ye here debating with these words?
Bethink ye how much better it must be,
That this man die, and not the nation perish.
We have but one course left us to pursue:
This man Jesus shall die, or else we must!
Whatever plan or time we may devise,
That He must die here let it be agreed."
His words prevailed, and then it was decreed
In solemn council that the Lord must die!
Their plans now made they only waited time
And opportunity to execute.
The Master knowing what they had decreed,
No longer walked in Jewry openly,
But He departing to a country came,
Near to the wilderness, and to a town
Called Ephraim, where He tarried for some days,
And His disciples faithful, went with Him.

XXXVII

While Jesus kept far from Jerusalem,
The Jews, because they feared the multitudes
That followed Him always in other parts,
Laid not their hands on Him to do Him harm,
But they continued plotting for His death,
And waited only for propitious time
When they might execute their vengeful plans.
The Master journeyed yet some time around
Beyond the Jordon in regions of Perœa,
Healing the sick, and preaching the "Glad News,"
Serene with full assurance that His work
Must be complete on earth before His end.
Then after certain days He signified
That He must go up to Jerusalem;
And to the Twelve He fully now disclosed
How that He would be treated shamefully
By Jews and Sanhedrin, Chief Priests and Scribes,
And by their council be condemned to die,
Delivering Him unto the Gentiles,
Who would mock Him, scourge Him, and crucify;
But after three days He would rise again.
Though this He told them many times before,
They still so blind, could not understand,
But dreamed of days when He would rule the land,
And they as princes sit on His right hand.

Then on a day He came to Jericho,
But long He tarried not, but hurried forth,
And with Him went a mighty multitude.
It chanced two beggars blind sat by the way,
And hearing the great throng as they passed by,
And learning Jesus was with them, cried out:

"Have mercy, Jesus, Thou Son of David!"
Then all the multitude the blind rebuked,
Commanding them that they should hold their peace.
But the blind men cried out the more, Saying:
"Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!"
More than the flight of worlds, or sun, or stars,
Of things, both visible and invisible,
All macroscopic, microscopical,
Molecular, and atomistical,
All potentates, thrones, principalities,
Or dynasties, or Emperors, or Kings,
Of things on earth, or things above the earth,
Is cry of one poor human soul in need
To Him who walked the earth as Son of God.
Now Jesus halts the moving multitude,
And standing still He called the two blind men:
"What will ye that I should do unto you?"
They say: "Lord, that our eyes may be opened!"
Then He, who made the limpid water wine,
Who, calm Himself, walked o'er tempestuous sea,
And raging winds rebuked, and stilled the storm;
Who with the barley loaves and fishes few
Fed thousands in the desert, and to spare,
Who caused to stand in awe the high and low,
And worship from the multitude received,
Was deeply moved by these two poor blind men,
And with compassion did He touch their eyes,
And said to them: "Your faith has made you whole."
When lo! their eyes were opened, and they saw.
Now with deep gratitude they took their place
Among the multitude, and followed Him.

And as He outward went from Jericho,
A publican, Zacchæus, called by name,

(And he was rich, and for his wealth had fame)
Desired much to see Jesus, who He was,
But was prevented by the surging throng,
Himself in stature being very small.
But nothing daunted he ran on before,
And up a sycamore tree clomb to see
The Master as He passed along that way.
And Jesus when He came beneath the tree,
Looking up and seeing Zacchæus said:
"Zacchæus, tarry not, make haste, come down,
For I today must at thy house abide."
Then did Zacchæus hasten and come down,
And did receive the Master joyfully.
The multitude who hated publicans,
And deemed them vilest sinners of all men,
When they saw this, were greatly scandalized!
For how could one consort, a righteous man,
With so vile sinner as this publican?
And now behold! Jesus had gone to lodge
With this despised outcast, and hated man!
And whilst they milled around and murmured much,
The Master sat within the house and dined.
How blest that home where Jesus goes as guest,
What benediction doth His presence bring!
The whilst they dined Jesus in converse sweet
Unfolded Truth of Life to publican,
And wisely led his struggling mind to see
That even *he* a righteous man might be.
The dining over Jesus rose to go,
But on the threshold paused to say farewell,
When from the throng they heard the mad complaint,
Then stood Zacchæus up, and said aloud:
"Behold, O Lord, the half of all my goods
I give to feed the poor, and him in need,

And if I have exacted wrongfully,
At any time, aught from a single man,
I gladly will him now fourfold restore."
The Master reads the history of man
Not only by the good confession made,
Sometime in stately prose, or limpid rhyme,
But also by the righteous deed sublime.
We judge a man oft simply by his creed,
God looks behind the creed and sees the deed,
And judges man by both the creed and deed.
And knowing all within Zacchæus' heart,
That what he now professed, he would perform,
Jesus proclaimed before the multitude:
"Today is come salvation to this house,
For he is also son of Abraham.
The Son of Man is come to save the lost,
And though this man was lost, he now is found."

XXXVIII

Again Passover Feast of Jews drew nigh,
And great the throng, and large the caravans
That journeyed daily toward Jerusalem,
Coming from every quarter of the world
Where Jews had, through dispersion, found a home.
Many of these coming before the Feast
To purify themselves by sacrifice,
And daily keeping of the Temple rites,
That ceremonially they might be clean,
And so declared by Priests, for keeping Feast.
Of these many had never Jesus seen,
But only of His mighty works had heard,
And how the people did believe Him Christ.
They therefore sought to see and Jesus hear.

But when in Temple He did not appear,
They disappointed, questioned each, and said:
"What do you think? Do you think He will come?"
Now the Chief Priest, and all the Pharisees,
Had warned the people: that if any man
Knew where Jesus was, he should show it them,
That coming there they might lay hands on Him.

While to Passover yet six days remained,
Came Jesus once again to Bethany,
Where He had raised up Lazarus from the dead.
And when the common people of the Jews
Learned this, they forthwith came to Bethany,
For to see both Jesus, and Lazarus,
Who had been dead, whom Jesus made alive.
Then did the chief priests at Jerusalem
Take counsel that they might kill Lazarus,
Because many by reason that He lived
Had gone away, and on Jesus believed.
Jesus having rested here for two days,
Sets out from Bethany, and journeys on
With His disciples towards Jerusalem.
Now when it was reported all abroad
That He was coming, and not far away,
Great multitudes went out for to meet Him,
And if He would, crown Him Messiah King.
When Jesus came to Bethpage, near Olives,
He halted, and thence two disciples sent
Into the village, saying unto them:
"Go ye into the village near at hand,
And ye straightway shall find a donkey tied,
And with the donkey ye shall find a colt,
Whereon no man hath ever ridden yet,
The colt loose, and bring hither unto me;

And if any man ask why ye loose him,
Thus shall ye say: 'The Lord hath need of him,'
And he will straightway send him hither back."
Then did they go their way as Jesus said,
And found the donkey and the colt tied fast,
But when from thence they sought to loose the colt,
The owner coming questioned what they meant
By loosing of the colt? They answered him:
"The Lord who sent us hence hath need of him."
And then the owner forthwith sent him back.
And when disciples with the colt had come
Unto the Lord, then all the people brought
Their garments and cast them upon the colt,
Which when they had done Jesus sat thereon.
By now a mighty multitude arrived
From out the city, and along the way
They formed a retinue to go with Him;
Some went before, some followed on behind,
And many thronged close up on either side.
As Jesus journeyed towards Jerusalem,
The people spread their garments in the way,
A token of their love and loyalty,
And branches from the trees they cut and brought
To decorate His way like royalty.
And as they onward move they shout His praise,
And cried: "Hosanna to great David's Son,
Blest Kingdom of our father David, Come!
Hosanna to the Lord in the highest!
Blest He that comes in the name of the Lord!"
Among this throng had come some Pharisees,
Not to commend the Master's blessed work
Of mercy, love, and charity for men,
Nor join with them in honoring Jesus,
But came to cavil, carp, and criticize.

When they saw how the common people loved
The Lord, and humbly sought to honor Him,
They bitterly among themselves bewailed:
"We hold our counsel 'gainst this man for naught,
For when the time arrives, and He returns,
The mighty throngs with Him fill us with fear,
And we with all our plans have naught prevailed,
While lo! the whole world is gone after Him!"
And when a Pharisee said sneeringly:
"Command this noisy mob to cease their cry,
And Thy disciples, ill-mannered, rebuke!"
The Master turned to him and gravely said:
"If these should hold their peace, the stones would speak!"
And now they onward move to Olive's brow,
From whence they downward look and city see:
Its whitened walls, its towers lifted high,
Stand proudly out, sun-kissed, against the sky.

The noble patriot his country loves,
And vows devotion to his native land:
If such be acres broad, with flowing streams,
With mountains high, and rich with golden seams,
With forests vast, with wealth untold in trees,
And round all flow protecting arms of seas,
Whose harvest fields a hundred fold doth yield,
Whose dwelling place a stately mansion rare,
Where neighbors, like-minded, join land to land,
And every thought and love of country share,
And each with swelling like emotions says:
"This is my country, home, and native land!"
For it the proud man will dare to die!
Or, if it be the sparse and barren hills,
Whose rocky furrows yield him scarce his bread,
That leave him poor indeed, year after year,

And with such poverty the ghost of fear:—
But, if here his eyes first the light beheld,
Its air he first took in as breath of life,
Its water drank, and on its bosom lay,
His house no stately mansion, but a hut:—
To him it still is native land and home;
And with the self-same love, devotion too,
He looks abroad and treasures hill and stream,
And that which other men might well despise,
He now surveys with glad and prideful eyes,—
This man, a patriot true, should duty call,
Would for his hills and hut dare too to die!
If by such token Jesus we shall judge,
We find Him Patriot par excellence.
For with a deathless love, He loved this land:
No hill o'er which His blessed feet did walk,
However mean and barren, piled with stones,
But was a sanctified and hallowed ground,
No mountain, rugged, vast, and stood out bold,
But there He loved to climb and offer prayer,
The valleys down between, the fields and vales,
The rolling Jordan, and the meaner streams,
Down to the tiniest rill that sang its way
Through meadows green, beneath the sun and stars—
All these He loved, and called His native land.
Her towns, her villages, and cities fair,
He swept within the scope of His great Love.
But more than all, Jerusalem He loved!
Her great Temple, her consecrated Shrine,
His Father's House, the beauty of the earth,
He prized above all else, and loved it most:
Her sacrifice, her incense odorous,
Her courts inviting multitudes to prayer,
Her candlesticks, her laver, and altar,

Her holy of the Holiest—"Secret Place—"
Where dwelt the unseen Presence once,
Her people, now enslaved by tyrannous Rome,
But more by galling thrall of baneful sin,
Who suffered much from men, but more from pride,
Who hated Gentiles for the wrongs endured,
Themselves a laughing-stock o'er all the earth;
He loved the rich, the poor, the high, the low,
The outcast sinner with the publican,
Loved all with a passion not born of earth,
Loved unto death, e'en the death of the cross!
But when now He beholds Jerusalem,
The capital city of His native land,
Knows what the days ahead so soon will bring:
How they shall spurn His claim to be their King,
How His thrice offered rule they will reject,
Blind, stupid, sodden, sunk in sin, abject,
Deluded, blinded through their unbelief,
Demanding at the hands of cruel men,
That He be nailed to ignominious cross,
And suffer all the shame and misery
Of a felonious death upon the tree;
Knows too, how the enemy soon will come
And cast a trench about the city fair,
Her walls break down, her people put to sword,
Her homes destroy, her Temple burn with fire,
Her men all slain, her women and children
Harassed by men, cruel and merciless,
And scattered to the four-winds of the earth,
And all Jerusalem left desolate
Till not one stone upon another left;
Then lifted up His voice, and burst in tears,
And sob out lamentations as He wept:
"O thou Jerusalem! Jerusalem!

Thou that stonest the prophets sent to thee!
And who without a cause have hated me,
How oft would I thy children have gathered
Together, even as a brooding hen
Her chickens under her protecting wings,
And ye would not! Behold, your house is left
Forever unto you now desolate!"

And when He came unto Jerusalem
With all the shouting and tumultuous throng,
The city was astirred, and moved to know
Who cometh with such escort and acclaim,
Triumphant to the gates so like a King?
And all the multitude shouted aloud:
"This is the Prophet come from Nazareth,
Son of King David, and Himself a King!"
One long ago had told this hour in song,
Who by prophetic gift had caught the notes
Out of the billowy tide of coming time,
And sang to cheer distraughted hearts of men:
"Behold thy King approaching comes to thee,
Not with the pomp and glory of earthly kings,
Whose chariots roll in splendor long the way,
With prancing steeds, with tossing head and mane,
And hoof-resounding dinning all the air,
Guided by lackeys clothed in silk and gold,
Escorted by triumphant soldiery—
But meek and lowly riding on an ass!"
Yet King in higher realms than Cæsar strode,
When o'er a conquered world in glory rode.
So Jesus riding on the ambling beast,
Passing through gate, enters Jerusalem,
Ascends into the Temple with the throng,
Whose joyful shouts resound without restraint;

And little children running through the courts
Of Temple, with lyric laughter and jubilant joys,
Fill all the House of God with gladsome noise,
Crying: "Hosanna to great David's Son!"
Then were the Priests moved with indignation,
And angrily protested unto Him:
"Hearest Thou not this childish blasphemy!"
The Master made reply, and said to them:
"Yea; did ye never read, 'Out of the mouth
Of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfect praise!'"
And when He had looked round upon all things,
It being now the eventide, went out,
And with the Twelve, returned to Bethany.

XXXIX

The evenings Jesus spent in Bethany,
But every day unto Jerusalem
Returned, and in the Temple boldly taught.
But all the while the Pharisees and Scribes
With all the rulers—Priests and the Chief Priests—
Convened at night and solemn counsel held,
Devising plans by which they might proceed
To apprehend Jesus, and stop His course.
And when they met, reports received disturbed
Them much, and brought disquiet to their minds;
For greatly did they fear the multitudes
That daily gathered in the Temple courts
To see the Master, and to hear Him teach.
One night when long they had debated much,
And found no wisdom in all that was said,
The sagest of their counselors arose,
One Annas, who himself was once High Priest,
And warned them solemnly in measured words:

"This man, I fear, ill bodes the common good;
If left alone, sedition surely comes;
Then soon red visaged Mars will walk abroad,
And this our fair land, resting now in peace,
Shall feel the shock and storm of bloody war,
And tot'ring reason will vacate her throne,
While wild delirium, drunk with fear and hate,
Usurp and reign where now we hold mild sway,
And Romans coming take our place away!
Let us do something quick this man to stop,
Ere He shall bring the nation into ruin.
My counsel is: He must be put to death!
Go hound His steps, hear every word He speaks,
Ply Him with questions hard before the throng,
Entrapped, He soon will forfeit their esteem;
Him then arrest, and forthwith charge with crime—
His blasphemous claim of sonship with God,
His lack of reverence for Moses' Law,
His profanation of the Temple courts,
And by His teaching leading throngs astray—
And for such crimes He should be crucified!
Him once we have securely in our hands,
Without delay we will condemn to death,
And sooner than the rabble are aware,
Will ask the Governor to ratify,
Our judgment, and on cross Him crucify!"

Thus while the Council plotted for His death,
The Master unmolested came and went,
And daily in the Temple taught the throngs.
The Scribes and Pharisees stood round and watched,
And questioned Him concerning what He said,
To see if they could catch Him in His words.
Sometimes these colloquies became debates,

Wherein always the Master answered them
To their confusion, leaving them perplexed
Far more than did their questions Him annoy.
Besides, their provocation offered Him
The better opportunity to speak
The truth He wished to tell to multitudes.
And when the days of this Passover week
Had all but passed away, and time drew nigh
For Him to consummate His Exodus,
The Master grew more bold, and spake the truth
Concerning law and sin and righteousness,
And openly charged Scribes and Pharisees
As hypocrites and sinners more than all,
Perverse, and held in wicked unbelief,
And on them did pronounce impending curse!
Nor wanted He now declaration clear
That He was David's Son, Messiah King,
God's only Son, the Saviour of the world.
And when He had completed all these words,
He left Jerusalem, and came no more,
Until He came the Victim for the cross.

XL

That night Jesus returned to Bethany,
And there Simon the leper made for Him
A supper, and invited friendly guests.
Among these, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus,
Whose house had been the Master's home of late.
Domestic Martha lent a hand as usual,
And graciously attended dining guests,
But Lazarus was honored at the board.
While they reclined, partaking of the meal,
Came Mary with an alabaster cruse

Of pistic nard, an ointment very dear,
The price of which was high exceedingly,
And crushed it with her hands, and part she poured
Upon the Master's head, anointing Him,
And some she also poured upon His feet.
Then Judas, son of Simon Iscariot,
Himself a thief, who pilfered from the bag,
With some pretense of indignation sighed:
"What waste! This precious nard might have been sold,
Whose price would be more than three hundred pence,
And all of which we might have given the poor;
But now it is lost! wasted foolishly!"
And this he said, not caring for the poor,
But wished to pilfer same from out the bag.
And Jesus hearing what was said, answered:
"Why trouble ye the woman in this deed?
For she hath wrought a good work unto me;
She did it to prepare me unto burial,
And she hath done by this all that she could;
And I say unto you, and do command,
That wheresoe'er this gospel shall be preached
In the whole world, this she hath done for me
For a memorial to her shall be told.
The poor, moreover, ye shall always have,
And when ye wish, may ever do them good,
But me ye shall not always have with you."
Now Judas more revolving in his mind
Than rest of Twelve the words the Master spake,
Determined in himself to have revenge.
Ofttimes before since joining Jesus' band,
Purloining from the meager store in hand,
The Master had in certain words revealed
That He knew the character he concealed,
And that he had a devil ruling him.

Besides, he felt neglected by Jesus
On prime occasions in the ministry,
And his soul cankered by this jealousy,
His conscience seared, he yielded up himself
To Tempter's snare, and would the Lord betray!
He who resolves within his own dark soul
A heinous crime, 'gainst man, or state, or God,
Will not be wanting long, nor time, nor place,
To speed the consummation of the deed.
That night while others slept, he stirred abroad,
And hastened onward to Jerusalem.
Within the city at priest Annas' house,
The Rulers—Scribes and Pharisees—had met,
Debating how without tumult at Feast
They might take Jesus, and put Him to death.
While thus they plotted, Judas knocks at door;
And when admitted, freely did them tell
Of his discipleship with Galilæan,
But that no longer would he follow Him,
Nor will he yield Him service any more,
And for consideration will make known
To them the place of His retreat at night.
Then were they glad exceedingly for help
To consummate conspiracy so vile
In plotting death of One so innocent;
Nor deemed the traitor's wage sufficient let
To reach the end they so devoutly wished.
They haggled and they bargained for the price
Till price of common slave was reached and set.
Of silver thirty pieces was the price
They weighed to Judas, Simon Iscariot's son.
When passion wild doth sway the soul of man,
And anger hot uncepters reason's throne,
The violent deed, though life itself is lost,

Hath some extenuation in its claim;
But when the sober reason is suborned
To plan a dastard deed 'gainst innocence,
And cavils not to use the traitor's wage,
Then casuistry has lost its day in court,
And nothing can exculpate such a crime.
No end however just can justify
The means unjust required to circumvent
And bring to pass the end which is desired;
Nor can compounding with the vilest wretch
A heinous act think to exculpate self;
Nor can man find excuse for sinful deed
By pleading Fate, or fixed decree of God;
Dire that necessity that holds a man,
In spite of high resolves that upward lead,
To always stoop to trite and meaner things,
And bends his high-born soul to sinful acts,
The rather than follow on god-like deeds:
To hope, but never realize his hopes,
To see, but ne'er attain that which is seen,
To feel, but powerless to enter in
That which he feels his life created for,
But shame and all confusion sees around,
And in the ashes of defeat to sit
Day after day until his tale is told,
Then like the dumb brute beast to die and rot!
What comfort then to tell a man that God
And Destiny have fixed this way for him!
But such is not the truth, you slander God,
You make Him worse than man—worse than Devil!
Better by far no god at all than this;
Let reckless Chance ascend the ruling throne,
And to his sportive whim let all things bow;
At least then culpability is gone,

And mortal man may take his chance with Chance.
But the All-Father is not so revealed;
In all His ways faithful; His attributes
Do show a nobler way than this you tell,
And make of Him a loving God for all.
He offers every man the better way,
In every high endeavor goes with him,
Applauds him when the righteous deed is done,
And sorrows most when he the way has missed.
But who will use the sordid wage to bribe,
The culprit, conscienceless, excites to act
His part in murderous conspiracy,
Excels the villain who may strike the blow,
And still a fierier doom deserves than he.
The bargain struck, the price within his hand,
Iscariot hastens back to join the band,
And watches for the opportunity
The Master to betray into their hands.

XLI

Now on the first day of Unleaven bread,
Came the disciples of Jesus and asked
Where did He wish that they prepare the Feast,
That they might with Him the Passover eat?
Then Jesus into the city sent them,
Describing how they would there find a man,
And, following him ev'n into his house,
Inquire, according to the custom held,
Concerning guest-chamber, and there prepare
For them the Passover to eat that night.
And they went forth, and found as He had said,
An upper large room furnished all complete,
And there prepared for Him the Paschal Lamb.

When night came on, came Jesus with the Twelve,
And soon arranged themselves around the board.
When all reclined, and waited, Jesus said:
"Desiring, I have longed to eat with you,
Before I suffer, this Passover Feast,
For I will not again eat it with you,
Until all in God's Kingdom be fulfilled."

And there arose among His followers
A sharp contention: who should be esteemed
The greatest, and who should be honored most?
Then rising up the Master laid aside
His garment to assume a servant's garb,
And with a towel girt Himself about;
Then into basin He did water pour,
And soon began to wash disciples' feet.
But when He comes to Simon Peter's feet,
Simon says to Him: "Lord, wash Thou my feet!"
Then Jesus answered him: "What I do now,
Thou knowest not, but shalt hereafter know."
But Peter still protesting, said to Him:
"Nay, Lord! Nay, never shalt Thou wash my feet!"
Then Jesus answered: "If I wash not thee,
Then neither shalt thou have a part with me."
Then Peter cried: "Lord, not only my feet,
But wash my hands, and also wash my head!"
Then suffered Him, and Jesus washed his feet.
So when He had done washing of their feet,
He said to them: "Know ye what I have done?
If I your Lord and Master wash your feet,
Ye also ought to wash each other's feet,
For I have this example given you,
No servant can be greater than his Lord;
And now if ye both see and know these things,

Happy, if faithfully ye shall them do."
When this was done, and He reclined again,
With deepest sorrow sighing Jesus said:
"And one of you this night shall me betray!
The Son of Man goes as it hath been writ,
But woe to that man who shall traitor be,
It better were that he had not been born!"
Then all start up with countenance aghast,
To think there was among them one so vile!
And each in turn cried out: "Lord, is it I?"
And Judas likewise joined the rest, and said:
"Name Thou the traitor! Why accuse us all?
Thou knowest, for no thing from Thee is hid;
We wish the traitor known; 'Lord, is it I?' "
Then Peter signaled to 'beloved' John,
To ask who was the man that should betray?
Then John on Jesus' bosom leaning asked:
"Lord, who is he this night betrayeth Thee?"
And Jesus said: "The one receiving sop!"
Then reaching in the dish, the choicest piece
He takes, and forthwith Judas gave to eat,
Saying: "Be quick with what thou hast to do!"
And Judas feigning charity to serve,
Immediately went out, and it was night!
And after they had eaten the Paschal Lamb,
Together with the bitter herbs prepared,
He took a loaf of bread, and broke it up,
A piece for each of His disciples left,
For Judas, Simon's son had now gone out,
And was no longer numbered with the Twelve,
And blessing it, gave each a piece, and said:
"Take, eat this bread, it is my body broke
For you!" In like manner He took the cup,
And giving thanks He said: "Drink ye all it;

This cup is the new covenant in blood,
Shed for remission of your many sins;
As oft as ye do this, remember me;
For when ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,
Ye do proclaim my death until I come.
I will not drink of the fruit of the vine
Again until that day when I shall drink
It in my Father's Kingdom new with you."
And after they had eat the bread and drunk
The wine, did Jesus further now disclose
To His disciples many blessed things.
He oft had chided them for unbelief,
Rebuked their selfish and earth-born desires,
Complained at them for dullness of their minds,
Condemned their littleness and narrowness,
And for their lack of patience chided them,
Until at times Himself impatient seemed.
But here tonight, forsooth, all this is passed,
And like a mother soothes her fearing child,
In darkness when the tempest rages wild,
His heartening words bring comfort to their minds.
Unlocking all His loving heart to them,
Confirming halting faith against all doubt,
He lingered long, and spoke that solemn night:
"I am the Vine, my Father Husbandman,
And every branch in me not bearing fruit,
He stretches forth His hand and takes away;
And every branch that beareth fruit He prunes
That it may bear yet more and richer fruit.
Ye are the branches, and I am the Vine,
In me ye must abide, if ye bear fruit;
If ye are fruitless ye will be cast forth
And withered, good for naught but to be burnt.
If ye abide in me, and let my word

Abide in you, then much fruit shall ye bear,
And herein is my Father glorified:
That whatsoe'er ye in my name shall ask
My Father will in heaven hear your prayer;
Herein my Father is proclaimed by faith,
And will be glorified by your request,
And then shall ye disciples be indeed.
Ye shall abide in me if ye obey
My words, and keep commandment given you;
And as I in my Father's love abide
By keeping His commandment, even so,
If ye keep my commandment given you,
Ye shall abide as truly in my love;
And this is my commandment unto you:
'Love one another as I have loved you.'
Obedience makes you more than servants then,
Makes you my friends, entitling you to know
All things which from my Father I have heard;
Ye are my friends, doing what I command;
Truly no greater love hath man than this:
That for his friends, a man lay down his life!
A little while, and ye shall not see me;
And yet a little while, ye shall see me,
For I shall go unto my Father soon.
But ye should not be sorrowful for this,
The rather for it should your joy be full,
Because I will not leave you all alone,
I will not leave you orphans: I will send
Another Comforter, who will abide
Through all the Age. He is the Paraclete:
When He is come, He will convict the world
Of righteousness, of judgment, and of sin:
Of sin, because they are in unbelief;
Of judgment, since the world's Prince hath been judged;

Of righteousness, because I go away
Unto my Father where they cannot come!
It is expedient then that I shall go,
That in my stead the Spirit may return;
For if I go not, then He will not come.
Remember all the words I speak to you;
A servant is not greater than his lord;
If they have persecuted me your Lord,
Be not surprised when you they persecute.
They will put you out of the synagogues,
They also shall even put you to death,
Thinking they render service unto God.
I truly say to you: That in the world
Ye shall have tribulations; ye shall weep!
But all your sorrows shall be turned to joy.
Let not your hearts be troubled any more;
As ye believe in God, believe in me.
There are many mansions in my Father's house,
And I go to prepare a room for you.
If this was not the truth I would tell you;
And if I go and make a place for you,
I surely in the end will come again,
That I may take you to that home prepared,
That where I am, there ye may also be.
These things I speak while yet I am with you,
But when the Comforter, the Holy Ghost,
Sent by the Father in my name, is come,
He shall teach you all things and bring to mind
All things whatsoever I have told you.
I leave you peace, my peace I give to you;
Let not your hearts be more disquieted.
I tell you all before it comes to pass,
That when it does occur, ye may believe."
When Jesus had concluded all these words,

He, lifting up His eyes to heaven, prayed:
"O Father, comes the hours to glorify
The Son, that He may glorify Thee more;
Since Thou hast given to the Son all power
Over all flesh to grant eternal Life
To all whom Thou hast given unto Him;
And this is Life eternal: that they know
Thee only as the true and living God,
And Him whom Thou hast sent—Jesus the Christ,
Ev'n as I have Thee glorified on earth,
So with that glory glorify Thou me,
Which long I had with Thee, and did enjoy
Before the world began, or man was made.
I have Thy name made known to men on earth,
Those whom Thou gavest me from out the world,
And they have faithfully held to Thy word,
Believing that Thou didst give me that word,
Even that which I now give unto them,
And they are now sure that I came from Thee,
And they believe that Thou didst send me forth.
I pray for them—I pray not for the world,
For those whom Thou hast given me I pray;
Even as mine is Thine, so Thine is mine;
Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to me.
I am to be no longer in the world,
But these Thy servants will remain a while,
O Holy Father, keep them by Thy Name,
Which Thou hast given me, and make them one.
I guarded them by Thy Name given me,
And they are all here, not one of them lost,
Save only the son of perdition gone!
The world hates them, and when I shall be gone,
They will be persecuted by the world.
I pray not that Thou take them from the world,

But that Thou guard them from the Evil One.
O, consecrate them by Thy Holy Truth,
As I for their sake consecrate myself;
And neither for these only do I pray,
But now for all who in my name believe,
And may they all be one, as we are one—
So perfect in their oneness that the world
May recognize and know Thou hast sent me,
And lovest them just as Thou lovest me.
O Father, those whom Thou hast given me,
I pray may with me in my glory come,
That where I am, there may they also be,
And that the love wherewith Thou lovedst me
May be diffused in them as in myself!"
And having ceased His prayer, He said to them:
"Arise, let us be going, the hour is late,
And presently the Prince of this world comes,
But no authority hath he in me."
And having sung a hymn, they all went out,
And as they went, the Master said again:
"This night ye shall offended be for me,
For as it hath been writ, so shall it be:
'The Shepherd will I smite, and all the sheep,
Shall from the fold be scattered far abroad;'
But after I am raised up from the dead,
I will before you walk in Galilee."
But Peter bravely answered Him, and said:
"Although all are offended, yet not I!"
And Jesus turning looked on him and said:
"Ah, Simon! Simon! Satan asked for thee,
That he might sift thee as a sieve of wheat;
But I have prayed that thy faith shall not fail,
And do thou, when thou hast been turned again,
Lend help to all thy brethren who are weak."

"But, Lord!" said faithful Peter once again,
"I tell you truly, I am ready now
To go to prison, aye, to death itself
For Thee, and I shall not offended be,
This night, or any other time for Thee!"
Then Jesus looked at him and slowly said:
"This night, Simon, before the cock crows twice,
I say to thee, thou shalt deny me thrice!"
Then walked they on and crossed the Brook Kidron,
And came unto the garden Gethsemane.
When they were well within the olive grove,
Jesus said unto them: "Sit here and pray
That from temptation ye shall now be kept,
While I go farther on and also pray.
Then taking Peter, James and John with Him,
He went on farther deep into the grove.
Here He was greatly troubled and exclaimed:
"My soul is now exceeding sorrowful,
Ev'n unto death! Abide ye here and watch!"
And then Himself withdrew among the trees.

XLII

The night was beautiful: The sphering moon
Hung o'er the western sky in tranquil poise,
Her soft light sifting down through leaves of tree
Where knelt the Master in Gethsemane;
The vernal zephyrs stirred no olive branch,
And quietude speaking through pendant leaves
Naught boded of impending tragedy;
The stars like watching sentinels gleamed afar,
And burning downward sent their raying light
Piercing the shifting shadows of the night;
The dismal night bird hushed his doleful note,

Nor screeching insect woke the stilly air;
No man or beast walked through the shadowy grove
To break the rendezvous Christ held with pain.
Hard by a mossy rock He kneeling bowed
His sacred head and prayed, beseeching God:
"If possible, my Father, let this cup
Pass from my lips: but not my will be done,
But Thine alone!" So earnest did He plead,
Beseeching Heaven for deliverance,
That the accelerated vital force
Broke through great nature's bounds, and sweaty drops
Like blood fell down, encrimsoning the sod!
And now an angel came and stood beside
The prostrate form, and gently lent his hand
To bear Him up, imparting strength to rise,
Assuring Him the Father's sympathy
In this propitiating agony.
Three times thus did He pray, and thrice returned
To find the waiting three in slumbers wrapped.
He gently chided that they could not watch
So short a time, but quickly them forgave,
Well knowing that they could not understand
The meaning of portentous hour at hand.
"Sleep on and take your rest, the hour has come:
Behold, the Son of man is now betrayed!"
While yet He spake, came a great multitude
With swords and staves from Elders and Chief Priests;
And skulking through the trees with cautious tread
Came Judas piloting them through the grove;
And like a scenting beast in quest of prey,
He ferrets out each corner, nook and way,
Where he perchance the Master now might find,
And into hands of sinners Him betray.
As they drew near, Jesus Himself advanced

To meet them, and in challenging words He spake:
"Whom seek ye?" They: "Jesus of Nazareth!"
"I am He!" boldly Jesus did reply.
Then like advancing army to attack
Is met by fusilade from ambuscade,
And driven headlong back; so they recoiled
In broken ranks, and backward fall to ground.
Again the Master challenged them and said:
"Whom seek ye!" and again they answered back:
"The Teacher, Jesus come from Nazareth."
The gleaming light from torches lifted high
Revealed the calm, majestic figure stand,
Nor sought He anywise to hide from them,
But stood out bold, and answered once again:
"Have I not said to you that I am He,
If therefore me ye seek, let these depart."
Then Judas unabashed pushed out before,
And like lead-hound, when victim is at bay,
Runs in to be the first to sink his fangs
Into the quivering flesh and taste the blood,
So runs he swiftly to the Master's side,
And throwing round His neck embracing arms,
Gave them the sign by planting traitor's kiss.
O Judas, foulest of mankind yet born!
Whose craven soul did greed and gold suborn;
Detestible and loathsome of all men,
Who with hadean purpose blackens sin
Itself by selling friendship's holiest trust!
The three disciples scarce aroused from sleep
Behold advancing through the shadows men
Deploying round with torches, swords, and staves;
Upleaping Peter grasped his unsheathed sword,
And nothing daunted rushes in between
His Master and surrounding multitude,

Prepared to sell at any cost his life,
The rather than come evil to his Lord.
"Avaunt! Stand back ye, or I strike!" cried he.
And then with gleaming sword uplifted high,
He rushed at servant of High Priest, and struck
With all his might his head to cleave in twain.
But missing mark, the glancing blow cut off
The ear, but further harm did not the man.
"Put up thy sword, Simon," the Master said,
"Who takes the sword, shall perish with the sword,
This cup the Father hath decreed I drink."
Then reaching out His hand, He touched the ear
Of High Priest's servant, and the wound was healed.
Then all of His disciples fearing fled,
And left Him there alone with officers.
These quickly gathered round, and seizing, bound
Him fast as though He was the meanest slave,
And hurriedly forsook Gethsemane.

They led Him not to Caiphas, High Priest,
But first to Annas, his father-in-law,
Who once himself the High Priest office held,
And long had bound himself with solemn oath
That should he ever get hands on Jesus
He would take vengeance by destroying Him.
Now gathered all the band around Jesus,
And sought by plying questions to distort
From Him confessions of some wrong or crime,
Of which in Council they might Him accuse.
Said Annas: "Thou long hast disturbed the peace,
And sought by what you taught to bring our name
In disrepute, and set at naught the Law;
Tell us now plainly of your doctrine taught,
Who your disciples, what your purpose be?"

Then Jesus knowing well their vile intent,
And that the truth their course would not prevent,
Yet answered not in malice, or in spite,
But calmly said to him with dignity:
"I nothing have concealed of all I taught:
Both in the Temple, and in synagogues;
Where all the Jews are wont to meet, I spake,
And naught in secret have I ever taught:
Ask those who me have heard, and they will tell,
For they know all things I have said full well."
And then a ruffian soldier standing near
Struck Jesus with his hand and sharply said:
"Beware how Thou the High Priest answerest!"

The soul of meanness never doth so thrive
As when 'tis deputized by wrong entrenched;
Then ignorance mocks gloatingly the wise,
And spurns the worthy, and condemns the good;
The coward then will strike the hero down,
And with the license of authority
Assume prerogative for wanton deeds;
The miscreant doth his vilest soul reveal,
And heaps contempt upon the virtuous man;
In such a presence goodness counts for naught,
And right no claim can make for its defense.

The smarting pain endured, the Master said:
"No evil word for High Priest here was meant;
Bear witness if I evilly did speak,
But if no evil can be testified,
And I spoke well, why smitest thou then me?"

While no bill of indictment they could find
For what He taught, or of confession made,
They led Him bound to house of Caiaphas.

Here all night long the Council of the Jews
Had waited tidings from the band sent out
To find and seize Jesus, and bring Him in.
These minions of the law arraigned Jesus
Contrary to the law, and sought His death.
They had suborned beforehand witnesses,
But when they came to testify, they spake
At variance, and what they said would not agree.
Then certain ones did solemnly affirm
That Jesus said: "This Temple made with hands
I will destroy, and will within three days
Build up another, made without man's hands."
Then the High Priest stood up and asked Jesus:
"Why answerest Thou nothing to these things?
Have you no word to say in your defense?"
But Jesus held His peace, and answered not.
And then the High Priest Jesus put on oath:
"I now adjure Thee by the living God,
Tell us, if Thou art Christ, the Son of God?"
Then Jesus answered him and said: "I am!
Moreover, comes the day when ye shall see
The Son exalted with authority,
And He will then return with heavenly clouds!"
While yet He spake He looked benignly round
Upon the Council, livid now with rage,
And over all a brooding silence fell.
Then the High Priest in wrath his garment rent,
And through the hall his roaring voice he sent:
"Hear ye this blasphemy, which He doth speak!
What further need have we of witnesses?
Behold, now ye have heard this blasphemy,
What think ye, and what is your verdict now?"
They answer made without delay, and said:
"We Him condemn! Let Him be put to death!"

About Him now they rushed on every side,
Like ravenous wolves to tear the helpless prey,
And in derision laughed and hissed His name;
They mocked Him as the meanest criminal;
They spat with frothing hate into His face,
And dared Him wipe the spittle off again;
His eyes they covered with a reeking rag,
And smiting Him upon the cheek they jeered:
"Now prophesy, 'Thou Christ!' who struck the blow?"

When night grew old, and dawned the coming day,
They wearying of the cruel mocking play,
Left off beating the gentle suffering Christ;
And He forspent beneath the bludgeoning blows
Sank down in pain, a friendless, helpless man!
Now two of fleeing disciples had returned,
And following, they came to High Priest's house:
John, known to High Priest, entered in at first,
And witnessed all that had been done the Lord,
But Simon Peter stopped without for fear,
Where only jeering mockings he could hear.
But interceding, John the porter asked
That Peter be admitted into court.
Then she the door unlatched and let him in.
With air of nonchalance the haughty man
Stalked near the fire, and 'gan himself to warm,
As though he little cared, and feared no harm.
But in the glare of light the maid him scanned,
And asked, if he was not one of the band?
He stoutly said: "I know not what you mean,
To me your silly words but monstrous seem!"
But when she was withdrawn he restless grew,
And rising up walked out onto the porch,
When lo! he heard the shrilly crow of cock.

And when he had returned within the court,
Another maid drew near and searched his face,
And to the men who stood around she said:
"This man was with Jesus the Nazarene!"
But Peter still denied he knew the Lord.
These men withdrew apart and counsel held
Concerning why he so insistently
Denied what all of them now knew so well;
Then coming back confronting him they said:
"Indeed, thou art one of these Galilæans,
Forsooth, thy very speech betrayeth thee!"
And one of the bond servants to High Priest
Came up just then, a kinsman of the man,
Whose ear in garden Peter had cut off,
And hearing Peter make denial, he said:
"Did not I see thee in the garden with them?
Most certainly thou art a Galilæan,
And a disciple of this Nazarene!"
Then Peter loudly did begin protest,
And vehemently cursed with vilest oaths,
That he did not so much as know the man,
Nor was concerned about His cult or fate!
Just then the clarion note again of cock
Was heard, outwafted on the stilly air!
The moment next from out the balcony
Looked Jesus down on the apostate man;
No word spake He of hot indignation,
Nor yet accusing glance shot from His eyes,
But only looked at him with pitying love.
Remembering what Jesus that night had said:
"Tonight sooner than shall the cock crow twice,
Thou, boasting Peter, shall deny me thrice!"
Did Peter blindly feel his way for door,
And weeping, staggered out into the dark!

XLIII

As soon as rosy dawn began to break,
And while the grey light glimm'ring scarce made day,
Nor yet the Morning Star had passed away,
The Council at command of Caiaphas
Rose up, and leading Jesus, bound, condemned,
They came to Pontius Pilate's palace gate,
To ask that He be crucified on cross.
The Governor still was deep in slumber held,
Nor from his brain the fuming wine dispelled,
Whereof he night before at banquet drank,
When Jewish Council knocked at palace gate,
To ask approval of their prisoner's fate.
At first the porter feared the Governor wake,
And threatening, warned the Jews the place forsake.
But when he saw the High Priest in their midst,
With priests, Chief Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees,
He feared them more, and asked the chamberlain
That he at once awake the Governor.
And when the surly Governor was aroused
Complaining much, with threat against the groom
For waking him from morning sleep so soon,
Commanded Jews come into Judgment Hall.
But they, fearing lest they should be defiled
By coming in the Procurator's house,
And so the Passover they could not eat,
Refused, and asked that he come out to them.
Then came the Governor out, and gruffly said:
"What is the charge ye bring against this man?"
They angered by the way that Pilate spake,
Defiantly replied, and answered him:
"Think you, if He were not an evil-doer,
We would have Him delivered up to thee?"

The Governor now in rage replied to them:
"Take Him yourselves, and judge Him by your law."
The Jews again essayed, and said to him:
"We found this man perverting all the land,
Forbidding us give tribute unto Cæsar,
And saying that He is Himself a king:
The penalty for such a crime is death,
But all the servants of the Emperor
Know that his law forbids Jews execute
The worst and meanest of our criminals,
And so we ask that you put Him to death."
When Pilate heard these charges, he withdrew,
And came again within Prætorium
Where Jesus had been left in charge of guards.
And when he was set down on Judgment Seat,
He looked with scorn at Jesus standing there,
So meek and helpless, bound and all forlorn!
Then said: "Tell me, art thou king of the Jews?"
And Jesus boldly answered him, and said:
"Dost thou speak of thyself concerning me,
Or did some other tell this unto thee?"
Angered that Jesus should address him thus,
The Governor with taunting pride replied:
"Am I a Jew! How should I know such things,
Except from others I should have heard it?
Thy people have delivered Thee to me,
And with a crime their Chief Priests have charged Thee;
Confess and tell me now what Thou hast done."
Again the Master answer made, and said:
"My Reign belongeth not unto this world;
If to this world my Kingdom did belong,
Then my disciples would have fought for me,
And not surrendered me up to the Jews.
But now my Kingdom is not of this world."

"Indeed!" the Governor sneeringly said,
"And so you are *a king* then after all!"
Then Jesus answered: "Yes, I am a King!
To this end was I born into the world;
I came to bear my witness for the Truth;
All those who are of Truth will hear my voice,
And hearing will make also Truth their choice."

The Governor much perplexed by such a man,
And more confounded still by what He said,
Rose up, and going out before the Jews,
Declared to the Chief Priests and multitude,
That he could find no fault in Him at all.
But when the Governor had spoken thus,
The Elders and Chief Priests accused Him much,
And witnessed many things against Jesus.
The custom was when one was tried for life,
He answer made to those who him accused.
So Pilate called Jesus, and said to Him:
"Dost Thou hear how much they accuse Thee of?
Thou hast permission now to make defence;
Speak Thou: What is Thy answer to these things?"
When men at variance come before the law,
And seek adjudication of a cause,
How glorious the hand that holds the balance then
If wisdom and honesty the office bear:
He wants not virtue to award the right,
But metes out justice with a single hand.
Naught here on earth is nobler than a judge
Who sits such daysman 'tween his fellowmen:
But when the ermine clothes a sycophant,
And tyranny besotted sits the bench,
He for the cause at issue cares no whit,
But if a whim, or price, entice him so,

Or praise be gained by such judicial act,
He will as soon condemn and damn a saint,
Or will the vilest wretch an angel paint.
The character of Pilate Jesus knew,
Knew too the temper of the multitude,
And should He make defense in truthfulness,
It naught could mean for cause of righteousness;
So held His peace and answered not a word.
Then marvelled much the Roman Governor
That Jesus spake no word in His defence.
The Jews then vehemently cried aloud:
"He stirreth up the people everywhere,
Beginning from the Province Galilee,
And all through Jewry, ev'n unto this Place!"

When Pilate heard He came from Galilee,
He thought of scheme to rid himself the man
By sending Him to Herod Antipas,
Who was the Governor of Galilee,
And was at that time in Jerusalem.
This was the Herod that killed John Baptist;
And once upon a time was much concerned,
Hearing of Jesus and His mighty works,
For fear that John had risen from the dead;
Besides, once Jesus sent him daring words,
In which He called the petty king "that fox;"
So thought this was the time to take revenge,
For none might evil speak against the king.
Again, he thought to have Jesus perform
Some miracle, or do some mighty deed
To please and entertain his royal court.
King Herod therefore, was exceeding glad
To see the guards arrive, bringing Jesus.
But after all, He was not John Baptist,

Nor had He that bravado he had thought,
But came now meek and lowly, led by guards;
Nor yet would any mighty work perform
To entertain the King and royal court.
Now the Chief Priests and Scribes had come along,
And standing round, did loudly Him accuse
Of many things, and charged against Him crime.
Then Herod questioned Him concerning these,
But Jesus answered him not with a word.
And then the petty king grew petulant,
And with his soldiers Jesus set at naught.
Him garbed in gorgeous garment like a king,
They then mocked with malignant scorn and spite
Until they wearied of the piteous sight.
And since they knew not what to do with Him,
Nor aught in Him could find to make report,
They sent Him back to Pontius Pilate's court.

XLIV

Now Pilate was perplexed the more at this,
For he had hoped that he was rid the man,
When he sent Him to Herod Antipas.
Then came another scheme into his mind:
It was a custom Romans granted Jews
That on Passover week the Governor
A prisoner might release, whom they desired.
And he then held a noted prisoner—
Barabbas, who had insurrection made,
And for sedition and murder was condemned;
Him he would set before them with Jesus,
Compelling them make choice between the two;
And surely then he Jesus could release,
For they would not prefer Barabbas scape.

While Pilate sat within the judgment hall,
And thought upon the course he would pursue,
The multitude without ceased not to cry
Against Jesus, and to demand His death.
Then Pilate going out declared to them:
"Ye brought this man to me as one that leads
The people all astray, perverting them,
And I have by the law examined Him,
But find Him guiltless of the charges made;
Nor yet did Herod find in Him a fault,
For he straightway did send Him back to us.
Now hear ye: Nothing has been done by Him,
For which the law should take His life away,
I therefore will Him scourge and turn Him loose."
Then Pilate calling loudly to the guards,
Had them lead Jesus and Barabbas out:
"Ye know our custom to release," he said,
"A prisoner at the Feast, whom ye may wish:
Behold Barabbas! now condemned to die—
A vilest wretch! seditious murderer!
And Jesus whom ye have delivered me,—
Not guilty: Whether of the twain choose ye?"
At first a silence fell over the Jews,
As they beheld the two bound prisoners stand;
But soon, urged on by Elders and Chief Priests:
"Give us Barabbas!" they in frenzy cried.
"What then," said Pilate, "shall I do with Christ?"
They answered quick: "Let Him be crucified!"
"What evil hath He done?" stormed Pilate back.
But still they cried: "Let Him be crucified!
For by our holy Law He ought to die,
Because He says He is the Son of God!"
When Pilate heard this he was much afraid,
And calling Jesus once again, he said:

"Tell me, Who art Thou, and whence comest Thou?"
And when Jesus refused to answer him,
The Governor did His silence sternly chide:
"Why dost Thou now refuse to answer me?
Dost know that I have power to release,
And also I have power to crucify?"
Then Jesus spake, and calmly said to him:
"Thou wouldest have no power over me,
Except it were given thee from above;
But they deliv'ring me have greater sin."
On this account was Pilate more perturbed,
And turning went again within the Hall.
And while he sat upon the Judgment Seat,
His wife sent words of warning unto him:
"Have thou nothing to do with that just One,
For I perceive He is a righteous man,
And do thou Him no harm, for in my dreams
This day I've suffered much on His account."
Then Pilate sought the more Him to release,
And had recourse to further stratagem:
He dared humiliate the Innocent
By mocking Him, and have his soldiers scourge
Him till His strength forspent by pain endured,
Then so presenting Him a woeful wreck
Of that which they had seen of Him before
That pity's voice, despite their anger fierce,
Relenting, yield to justice' pleading claim,
And He the innocent man might release.
So Jesus was turned over to a band
Of soldiers to perform this cruel act.
These led Him off into Prætorium,
Where the entire cohort was called to meet.
They first stripped Him, and bound Him to a post,
And after mocking Him with jeering scorn,

They plied flagellum—horrid Roman lash!
Until the quivering flesh was torn from back,
Leaving Him weak and welt'ring in His blood!
This done they unbound Him from the post,
And garbed Him in an old soiled purple robe;
They plaited an acanthine crown with thorns,
And in derision pressed it on His head.
Arrayed thus like a king upon his throne,
They placed a reed for scepter in His hand,
And then they kneeling down saluted Him
In mockery: "All hail! King of the Jews!"
And not content they smote Him with their hands,
And some with rods ceased not to strike His head.
Then once again did Pilate bring Him forth,
His countenance more marred than any man,
Disfigured till He seemed a man no more!
Truly a man rejected and despised
By men, no beauty now in Him appeared
That seeing any man should Him desire.
Deep in His soul the worm of grief had eat,
And all the waves of sorrow overflowed,
Until He was acquainted with all pain.
But through it all He opened not His mouth,
Nor yet complained at those afflicting Him.
Moreover, Pilate did despise the claim
Of Jesus that He was Himself a king,
And by this mocking gloated in his hate
When he beheld the lonely man appear
With crown of thorns and sceptered with a reed.
Then came the Governor out to multitude,
And with great show and hesitation said:
"Behold, I bring again this man to you
That ye may know I find no fault in Him."
Then Jesus wearing purple robe came out,

With crown of thorns pressed down upon His head,
Whose piercing showed the trickling trace of blood,
And in His hands He held the scepter reed.
At first when multitude caught sight of Him,
A deepening silence like the fearful calm
That slumbers in the storm's portentous pause
Then brooded over all, and Pilate watched
The upturned faces, fain to catch their will,
And if his purpose aimed had prospered well,
That he might free the Man of Galilee.
Then like a conqueror he gesture made,
Proclaiming said to them: "Behold the man!"
But instantly they cried: "Away with Him!
Away with Him! Let Him be crucified!"
The Governor disappointed and chagrined:
Now angry grew and thundered out to them:
"Take Him yourselves and crucify the man,
For in Him I have found no fault at all."
Yet more they cried: "Let Him be crucified!
Let Him be crucified! Away with Him!"
Then taunting them he said: "Behold your king!"
But louder still they clamored: "Crucify!
For by our law this fellow ought to die!"
Then Pilate with no complaisance did snarl:
"What! shall I crucify your king?" he said.
"This man is not our king, we have no king
But Cæsar; and if thou release this man,
Thou art no friend to Cæsar!" cried Chief Priests.
Then Pilate seeing he nothing could prevail,
But rather now a tumult would arise,
Took water, and before the multitude
Did wash his hands, and solemnly proclaimed:
"These hands are innocent of this man's blood!"
The Jews with shrieking laughter cried aloud:

"Let His blood be on us forevermore,
And on our children!" Then the Governor
Wishing to placate all the multitude,
Gave sentence that it should be as they wished.
He then released Barabbas unto them,
But Jesus he delivered to their will,
And gave consent that He be crucified.

XLV

When Judas heard that Jesus was condemned,
He did repent himself, and brought again
The thirty pieces of silver, the price
Received from Priests and Elders to betray
The Son of Man into their wicked hands.
With sobs and sighs he offered back the price,
Saying: "I have sinned! I have greatly sinned!
For He is not guilty whom I betrayed;
Upon my soul, take back the price ye paid,
And know the blood ye shed is innocent!"
They now but little cared for all his pain,
And rather grew impatient at his words.
But when his earnestness pleaded his cause
So strong, and he ceased not to importune
That they receive the thirty pieces back,
And free him from all part in what was done,
They angry said: "What is all this to us?
This now is your business, see you to it!"
Then Judas shrieked: "But I have sinned!
Take the accursed money back! Take back!"
And then with hands uplifted high he hurled
With all his might the money down at feet
Of priests in sanctuary, then fled out.
And as he went from out the Temple court,

The cautious Priests, dumbfounded at his act,
Collecting, gathered up the clinking coins,
Each piece accusing witness of their part
In all the dastard plot and sinful deed.
The money back in hand, with squeamish qualm,
They pondered o'er what might be done with coins;
With unctuous piety they thought not well
To put blood money into Treasury;
So bought a field to bury strangers in!

But Judas walked the streets in raving gloom,
Until the sun went down, and darkness came;
Then driven by remorse and vain regret,
He left, and hurried out the city's gate.
The path he took, led high up on a cliff,
From whence, and beetling down, a precipice
Fell off, and hung far o'er a dark ravine.
Hard by a frail and scrawny cedar grew,
Whose roots had scanty hold on rocks and ground,
With tenure weak, and strength all insecure.
About this fragile tree one end of rope
He wound, the other tied around his neck,
And standing, gazed far dawn in dark abyss.
Just then the elements in fretful storm
Broke loose, conjoined in high-engendered rage,
And with impetuous blast roared up the gorge;
Above the ebon clouds did madly race,
Their gaping bosom by the lightning torn,
Whence pealed the jarring, crashing thunder bolt,
Till nature seemed to be in wild revolt.
Thus stood the traitor mid the warring strife,
But in his soul a fiercer battle raged,
Inviting death, thrice welcome more than life.
But still he hesitated while he wailed:

"O dark-eyed night, be thou my constant friend;
Conceal me from the scrutiny of men,
Who judge their fellows by their faithfulness;
So may the sunny day ne'er blaze again
My hated face, nor yet reveal my deed!
To think upon my deed is worse than hell!
O Hell, be thou my sweetest refuge now;
Ope wide thy door, and let this sordid soul
Plunge deepest down into thy lurid flames;
Ah fire! burn thou this cankerous heart to ash;
Eyes! weep thy briniest floods till all the wall
Twixt bitter life and death be swept away;
Ye feet, that led the way to His retreat,
Shall never walk again a thornless path,
But limp down road of fire with brimstone strewn;
O hands, that did the glitt'ring silver clutch,
Thy last gross deed hath been to tie this knot,
Which soon shall smother out my hated breath;
And O ye lips that plantedst traitor's kiss,
Taste thou this bitt'rest gall with frownless bliss!"
Then plunged he headlong down from topmost cliff,
And swung far out over the yawning gulch;
Suspending for a moment, dangled there,
When tautened rope gave way and let him fall
Sheer down among the jagged, sharpened rocks,
Which cut him twain, and all his bowels gushed out!
Thus he who follows in the way of sin,
And to temptation yields to do its will,
Believing rich reward will come to him,
Of pleasant life, or coffers filled with gold,
Shall find at last but bitter mockery!
However flowery the path where crouches sin,
Its hideous presence and design concealed,
Awaits its victim like ferocious beast,

Or serpent, beaded-eyed, with poisonous fangs,
To strike relentless down all whom it may—
The aged man, leaning upon his staff,
Composed to end his days in peaceful hope;
The youth, with songs of joy upon his lips,
And sheen of happiness upon his brow,
Dreaming of virtuous life, and only good;
The saint with holy thoughts and Psalms of praise;
And the poltroon and wretch already doomed;
Or holiest Being that ever walked the earth—
And when its work is done, and woe ensues,
The monstrous thing in glee will turn and mock!
In life its sole reward—bitter remorse,
And after life its wage—a bitt'rer death!

XLVI

Now when the soldiers wearied mocking Him,
Relenting, they took off the purple robe,
And putting His own garment on again,
They led forth Jesus to be crucified.
Him they compelled to carry His own cross;
But when they came without the city's walls,
He clean forspent, fell down beneath the load.
It chanced a stalwart man, Simon by name,
Who from Cyrene came, was pasing by,
Him forthwith they impressed to bear the cross.
A multitude of people followed Him,
Among them women, who bewailed and wept;
And Jesus turning unto them declared:
"O daughters of Zion, weep not for me,
But rather for yourselves and children weep:
Behold the days are coming, in the which
There shall be such distress that men will say:

'Happy are they who have no children borne,
And happy they who never did give suck!'
Then shall they unto mountains cry and say:
'O Mountains, Fall on us!' and to the hills:
O Hills, Come quickly, and hide us from sight!'
For if they do these things in a green tree,
How dreadful what they shall do in a dry!"
And when they came to Golgotha—the Skull,
To lessen fear of death, and pain to lull,
They mingled wine with gall for Him to drink;
But when He tasted it, refused the draught.
And then they nailed Him on the cruel cross!
While they were driving nails in hands and feet,
He prayed for them: "Forgive them, Father, this,
For they who do it, know not what they do!"
The cross they lifted up like as a tree,
And left Him hanging in His misery!
While yet the composition of the deed
Contained the will and purpose of High Heaven,
Yet still its execution was so fouled
By dastard men, inspired by deepest hell,
That evil's machinations here ensued,
And wicked hands ensnared Him to His death;
Yet Will of Heaven fell out on Calvary,
And righteousness prevailed triumphantly.
Then Pilate wrote a title of the charge
Against Jesus, and placed it o'er His head,
That all might know why He was crucified;
And he was also fain to mock the Jews;
And lest that any should not understand,
The writing was in Hebrew, Latin, Greek:
"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews!"
But Chief Priests of the Jews to Pilate said:
"This writing now doth more of insult add,

For this impostor never was our king;
Write this: 'He said, He was King of the Jews!'"
Then Pilate angry, and disgusted more,
Replied: "What I have written, I have written!"
And scowling, from his presence drave them out.

XLVII

Then Jesus looking down from torturing tree,
Beholds His mother and some women weeping,
Sees also that disciple whom He loved,
And to His mother says: "Behold thy son!"
And to disciple: "Thy mother behold!"
Then ever afterwards beloved John
Became as son to mother of our Lord.
Then multitudes passing by railed on Him:
"Thou that destroy'st the Temple, save Thyself!"
"If Thou art Son of God, come down from cross!"
The Scribes and Elders joined in mocking Him,
And in like manner also the Chief Priests:
"He saved others, Himself He cannot save!
He claimed to be the King of Israel,
Now let us see Him come down from the cross,
And then we will receive Him our true King;
He trusteth God, let God deliver Him;
He said He was God's Son! If God desires
Him, surely God will now deliver Him."
And ev'n the robbers who were crucified
With Him did cast at Him the same reproach.
But one of them repenting turned and said:
"We justly now receive our recompense,
But this man hath done nothing of offence."
Then turning back to Jesus, prayed: "O Lord,
Remember me, when Thou shalt come to reign!"

Although engaged in holiest, mightiest Work:
Dying to right all wrong, and save a world,
The Master, Prince of life, held Death at bay,
The whilst He unto dying thief did say:
"Come thou this day with me in Paradise!"
Bereft of human aid, He knew no fear,
But calmly waited Death, the wage of sin;
He knew no sin, yet He for sin endured
The cross, and poured His soul out unto death.

When hung Prometheus on Caucasian Rock,
The beaked bird on his vitals gorged each day,
But he died not: each night renewed his life,
Each coming day he met to bear the pain.
But willingly he suffered not this shame,
He lived to curse the god who chained him there!
No pain for other men did he endure,
Nor by his suff'ring took away their sin;
'Twas he who pilfered heaven of holy fire,
And for his sin endured Celestial ire.
Not so with Him who hung on Calvary:
No charge against Him could High Heaven bring,
Nor least infraction of the law divine,
Nor law of man on earth did He transgress;
He never spake one word wrong, or unjust,
Nor yet the least tainted with selfishness.
He came, He lived, He suffered, and He died,
Upon the shameful cross was crucified,
And suffered all for love of sinful men,
To give them Life, and take away their sin.
He willingly accepted place of man—
The Victim and the Ransom for man's soul—
And for man poured His soul out unto death.

The sun o'er head its mid-day post now reached,
No drifting cloud its shining face obscured,
But glaring downward sent its burning rays,
Increasing torture to Him on the cross.
And while men watched, and while He agonized,
Then suddenly went out the light of sun!
Not since the Voice omnipotent called forth
His fiery rays to light this Universe,
Had the great Orb diminished its pulsing flood,
Nor veered his course mid kindred suns and worlds,
Nor yet for once forgot the high command;
But here today in mid-day splendor quenched
His beams, and hid his shining face from earth,
And shrouding darkness covered all the land,
Till men saw not, and groped in speechless fear.
Then cried aloud the Master from the cross:
"Eloi! Eloi! Lama, Sabachthani!"
The cry was heard above the taunt and jeer
Of multitudes whose shouts were filling air;
And some who stood near by when they heard it,
Not understanding, thought that Jesus called
Elijah now to come and take Him down;
But some of them still madly mocking said:
"Let be; let us see if Elijah comes
Now to His rescue, and will take Him down!"
But what the dying Master said was this:
"My God! My God! Why forsakest Thou me?"
He had been mocked, and spat upon, and scourged,
And on the shameful cross been crucified;
Men had forsaken Him, and angels durst
Not give their ministry to succor Him;
Hot pain with hurrying feet raced through His frame,
Till nerves, joints, muscles, eyes, head, tongue, were all
One raging, seething, welt'ring agony.

Yet for all these Jesus made no complaint,
For through them all the Father was with Him;
But now alone He must the "winepress" tread;
The blow must fall on His defenceless head
In fullest scope, until the price be paid,
By which redemption for lost man is wrought.
Pause here again my Muse; let not my song
Attempt to tell that which no man can know,
Nor Prophet, nor Seer, nor Angel hath yet told,
Nor none of men yet living hath passed through—
The mystery of loneliness endured
By Son of God in that redemptive hour!
All we can tell is that which we believe:
That in the plan divine to save mankind,
The Father from beloved Son withdrew,
And left Him on the cross alone with death,
That man might never walk that path alone,
But have a Saviour to deliver him;
A Daysman who for man may pay the price,
Whose blood and righteousness will sin suffice.
Thus when He had the cup of sorrow drained,
And when most poignant grief had pierced His soul,
And writhing body had endured all pain,
He knowing that the end was now at hand,
Did gather up His strength and said: "I thirst!"
Then some one straightway ran and took a sponge,
And dipping it in vinegar, pushed it
Up to His parched and quivering lips to drink.
When Jesus had the vinegar received,
He spake again and said: "It is finished!"
Yet still He lived, and turning dying eyes
To heaven He prayed: "O Father, I commend
With faith my spirit now into Thy hands!"
And then with one loud cry, none understood,

His breath that had been short, now shorter grew,
The rigid limbs and muscles taut relaxed,
The silver cord o'er-strained, loosened and snapt,
The golden pitcher at the fountain broke,
The lifting wheel at cistern ceased its stroke,
He bowed His head, He yielded up the ghost,
The Prince of life, the sinner's Friend, was dead!

The brewing winds now broke o'er Calvary,
More terrible than storm on Alpine Height,
Or breath of mighty Jupiter enraged
On high Olympus, hurling thunder-bolts
And gleaming lightning o'er topmost peaks;
The crashing thunder rolls along, and roars
Through the vast vaulted corridors of heaven;
The solid earth, as if from fear, did quake,
And trembled like some being animate,
When conscious that great danger is at hand,
Or some act horrible is imminent;
The rocks asunder split like canvas woven
Of gossamer, when torn by giant's hand;
The sheeted dead from riven tombs arose,
And putting off the cerements of the grave,
Came forth in life again, and walked abroad!
The veil within the Holy Temple rent,
And did no longer hide the Mercy Seat.
Now the Centurion, and they that watched with him,
Seeing how Jesus died, and all these things,
Did fear exceedingly, and trembling said:
"This was a righteous man, and wholly good,
Yea, of a truth, this was the Son of God!"

XLVIII

That evening in the twilight gloaming came
A man named Joseph of Arimathæa,
A councilor of honorable estate,
Who had consented not to Jesus' death;
For he was a disciple of the Lord,
But secretly because he feared the Jews.
And Nicodemus, Ruler of the Jews,
Came also with him, and they twain did crave
Of Pilate that they might the body take
Down from the cross and bury in a grave.
For Counselors, they knew the law that said:
"And if a man have sinned deserving death,
For which he hath been hanged upon a tree,
Lest peradventure the land be defiled,
Leave not exposed such dead until the night,
For he hath been accounted cursed of God,
But bury him by all means out of sight."
These friends knew Jesus kept through life the law,
Nor paid He penalty for breach in death,
But gave obedience with His latest breath.
They seeing that He was already dead,
Bethought them to contrive in charity
Avoidance of this ancient law's stern curse
By so entombing Him that not in death
Should He seem party to the broken law.
And Pilate learning Jesus now was dead
Consented: and they took the body down.
Now Joseph had a garden, in this a tomb
Fresh hewn from rock, wherein no dead had lain;
And this was nigh the place of crucifixion.
It was the Preparation Day of Jews,
For this they hastily the body wrapped

In a clean linen cloth with spices brought
By Nicodemus, a hundred pounds in all,
And gently laid Him in the sepulcher;
And rolling a great stone against the door,
They went away, and left the body there.
There were some women—Mary Magdalene,
And with her Mary, mother of Joses—
Who saw the place where they had laid the Lord;
These too, withdrew and left Him with the night!
Strange was that night, and lonely all its hours!
The ebb and flow of things approached nearest
The point of perfect peace in Nature's realm,
And shrouding silence universal fell.
Then came on Sabbath Day, and sweet rest reigned
O'er all the land, and Heaven's command was kept:
The weary ploughman left the furrowed field,
The merchant ceased to cry his wares in mart,
And trade of every kind had left the street,
And men forgot their cares, and surcease found
In prayer and praise in holy solitude.
Meanwhile, the Governor at request of Jews
Had placed th' Imperial seal upon the tomb,
And stationed Roman guards about the grave,
That neither friend nor foe might it molest.
But when the end of holy Sabbath came,
And it was dawning towards first day of week,
Ev'n while it was yet dark, the women came
Again, bringing new stores of spices bought,
To see the tomb, and Him afresh anoint.
And whilst they were coming bethought themselves:
Who shall roll them the stone away from door?
But drawing near, they were amazed to see
The stone already had been rolled away!
And when they had approached the empty tomb,

Seeing the couch within the rocky womb,
But saw not Him who had thereon been laid,
Great was their fear, and loud lament they made.
And as they wept, they stooping down beheld
Two men in garments white—they thought them men—
But they were Messengers sent down that night
From heaven to roll from tomb the stone away,
And be at dawn of that great Easter Day.
The angels to the women spake and said:
"Why seek the living here among the dead?
He is not here, but risen as He said;
These things to His disciples go and show,
And bid them meet the Lord in Galilee,
For there He hath appointed them to see."
But Mary tarried while the others left,
For more than they she sorely was bereft.
And as she lingered, still she wept aloud,
Her trembling body down to earth she bowed,
Like as a fragile bush when swayed by wind;
Her tears so copious flowing left her blind.
Then peering through the briny mist she sees
A man standing alone among the trees.
She thinking him the gardner of the place
Approached, and lifting up her troubled face
Durst ask of him, if he the corpse had moved?
And further still her query she pursued,
Saying she would the body take away.
The man, His face unseen, did simply say:
"Mary!" That Voice so many times had heard,
When overborne by doubts, or when she feared,
Or when His Stories she had heard Him tell,
That all its accents soft she knew full well.
So by it now she knows that Jesus speaks,
And He it is whom sorrowing most she seeks,

Knows that He lives again, and is not dead!
Then falling down she clasped His feet, and said:
"Rabboni!" And with rapture spake the word,
For now she knows that she has seen the Lord!

XLIX

AN EASTER HYMN

I

And so,
They laid Him low!
The Prince of life in death's embrace,
To wait the coming morn;
And Joseph's tomb did hide His face,
Now lifeless, so forlorn!
From cruel hate and scorn;
And so,
They laid Him low!

II

And so,
They laid Him low!
With hearts all sad, of hopes no ground,
They mournful turned away:
The tomb sealed up, the guards around
To watch the lonely clay,
Through night till break of day:
And so,
They laid Him low!

III

And so,
They laid Him low!

And all His friends forgot His word
That He would rise again;
And like the thrust of cruel sword
Pierced all their hearts with pain;
For doubt their faith had slain:
And so,
They laid Him low!

IV

And so,
They laid Him low!
But death He chose because He loved,
And yielded to death's stroke
That He might save those whom He loved
From death when He awoke,
And all death's bonds be broke:
And so,
They laid Him low!

V

And so,
They laid Him low!
Then came the dawn of Easter Day:
The guards awoke to flee,
And angels rolled the stone away,
That all who came might see
That Lord of death was He,
E'en though
They laid Him low!

VI

And so,
They laid Him low!

But up He rose from out the tomb:
Hallelujah! He lives!
Let every heart prepare Him room:
Hallelujah! He lives!
And gifts to men He gives
Of life,
Eternally!

L

For forty days He tarried here on earth,
And oft to His disciples did appear,
Dispersing fretful doubts, increasing faith,
Until they knew He was the very Christ.
And when no longer there remained a doubt
That He their Lord, who had been crucified,
Was now by resurrection glorified—
That death had no dominion over Him—
One morn He led them out upon a hill,
And there declared that all authority
On earth and in high heaven was in His hand.
And His last words spoken to them were these:
"Go ye in all the world, and preach my word;
Bid the whole earth repent, and me believe;
And whoso will believe and be baptized,
He shall be saved, and have eternal Life;
But who will not believe, shall be condemned;
Fear not, for lo, until the Age shall end,
I will be with thee, and will thee defend."
And when He had spoken these things He rose
Upon a cloud, and upward cleft the sky,
And from the earth, and from their sight, He passed!

LI

EPILOGUE

Not yet hath mankind sung His matchless worth,
Nor yet the half been told here on the earth
Of life He lived, or death He died for men.

Build ye in stone cathedrals stately high,
Whose towering domes shall reach highup as sky—
Memorial to the Man of Galilee;

Tell ye to earth's remotest bounds in time,
With phrases eloquent, or limpid rhyme—
Let the sweet bard in rapture sing His name;

But when the last word has been spoken well,
The last sweet strain of rapturous song shall swell
In tuneful lay of gladness to His worth—

When all rich stones of earth in beauty stand
In Temples reared by love in every land
To worth and glory of that perfect Life—

Resplendent all, in both its word and deed,
And every nation bring Him worthful meed,
And crown Him first and greatest of the great—

Then shall the heavens, the earth, the shoreless main,
And creatures of all spheres, through countless days,
Sing on the worth and glory of His praise.

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